

Monday September 28 1998

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The Guardian

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

The 12-page section

Sport

Storm breaks over contrite Di Canio

With today's television, radio and European weather



Polly Toynbee:

Put passion back in our romance

Comment, page 8

Kohl's reign is over

Schröder sweeps to victory in German elections



Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY and Europe entered a new era last night when the Social Democrat, Gerhard Schröder, defeated Helmut Kohl as German Chancellor after 16 years in power. It was the first time since the war that German voters have removed an incumbent chancellor.

By German standards, it was a landslide victory for the country's biggest and oldest political party. Mr Schröder's Social Democrats (SPD) took around 41 per cent of the vote, some 6 points ahead of Mr Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU) and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, according to early projections based on exit polls last night.

"It's a difficult evening for me," conceded Mr Kohl as the scale of the Schröder victory became clear. He immediately announced he was surrendering the chairmanship of his party, which he has led for 25 years.

With slightly more than 35 per cent, the CDU slumped to its worst post-war performance, while the SPD's projected vote was its best showing since 1989.

In his first post-poll remarks, the 54-year-old victor paid tribute to the retiring chancellor and pledged that the priority of the new government would be to tackle unemployment of more than 4 million, the single biggest factor in Mr Kohl's defeat.

Mr Schröder also stressed that his administration would pursue "continuity in foreign policy".

"It is a dramatic defeat for the Kohl government," said Kerstin Müller, deputy leader of the environmentalist Greens. "The Kohl era is over."

The margin of the Schröder victory was considerably larger than predicted by the opinion polls on the eve of the election and represented a

greater than expected triumph for the new chancellor, until now the prime minister of his native northern state of Lower Saxony.

It remained unclear last night whether Mr Schröder would try to form a left-of-centre coalition government which would bring the Greens into government in Bonn for the first time. Alternatively, he could offer a centrist "Grand Coalition" to the post-Kohl CDU, with the latter as the junior partner in a government which would command almost 80 per cent of the new parliament.

Mr Schröder and the SPD chairman, Oskar Lafontaine, said they would consider the new balance of forces overnight before deciding on their coalition options. Wolfgang Schäuble, Mr Kohl's number two and the favourite to take over the leadership of the CDU, said it was up to the election winner to make the first moves on a possible coalition.

"It's a clear defeat and it hurts," said Mr Schäuble. "The CDU is in for a difficult time. It's the end of the era of Helmut Kohl."

The result made Mr Schröder Germany's third SPD chancellor, following Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, and also confirmed the ascendancy of left-of-centre parties across Europe, putting Germany alongside Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and most of Scandinavia.

"Germany will not become a different republic through this election," Mr Schröder said.

Amid scenes of jubilation at the SPD headquarters in Bonn, the new chancellor sounded sober and statesmanlike and declined to wax triumphalist. "I want to declare my respect for Helmut Kohl. He was a very difficult opponent. He and I fought a fair election."

"I stand for economic stability and above all for foreign policy continuity," Mr Schröder went on. "My most important aim is to fight against the scourge of mass unemployment."

Reading between the lines of his initial remarks, Mr Schröder sounded keener on a "Grand Coalition" with the CDU than a leftist deal with the Greens.

Mr Schröder ascribed the SPD triumph to the party selecting the right candidate, having the right manifesto, and performing in a much more disciplined way than it has done for years.

"The voters want a fresh start," said Mr Lafontaine, who will have a crucial say in the Schröder-led government.

"We've worked for this victory for three years. The party was disciplined as never before."



Gerhard Schröder gives the victory sign at his party headquarters in Bonn yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: ANJA NIEDERHINHAUS

After 16 years, a place in history



Kohl votes in his home town of Ludwigshafen yesterday

WITH his wife, Hannelore, by his side, and a clutch of outgoing cabinet ministers congratulating him around his giant figure, a chastened and gracious Helmut Kohl last night took his leave of German, European, and world politics, writes Ian Traynor.

A hush settled over Bonn's Konrad Adenauer House, the national headquarters of Mr Kohl's Christian Democratic Union, as the leader prepared to give his valedictory message to the party faithful. Then before Mr Kohl could speak, the applause broke out and went on for several minutes.

Mr Kohl smiled reflectively as he addressed stunned party workers. "This is a difficult evening for me," he began. "This

defeat is beyond even discussing and I will accept the consequences myself."

Having won four federal elections in a row and served for 16 years, Mr Kohl has claimed his place in the history books.

"We achieved a huge amount for our country," Mr Kohl said. "German unification and European unity."

"Sixteen years was a long and a good time," said Norbert Blum, Mr Kohl's labour minister and the only minister in every cabinet since October 1 1982. "I'm proud to have been with Helmut Kohl for 16 years. But you have to be able to let go."

Mr Blum was close to tears. Wolfgang Schäuble, Mr Kohl's anointed successor, by contrast, was sober

and perhaps impatient. Having waited a long time to shine, Mr Schäuble briskly fixed on the future.

Peter Hintze, the CDU general secretary, called Mr Kohl the "greatest federal chancellor" in German history.

For the man who seized the opportunity to unify Germany when the Berlin Wall crumbled in 1989, who then pushed European integration as far and as fast as he could, and who did more than any other individual to launch the single European currency, Mr Hintze's verdict is perhaps justified.

At the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, crowds gathered to mourn or celebrate. "I'm really surprised at the result," said one student in her 20s, "but it's about time things changed."



EMPORIO ARMANI

Inside

Britain
New Labour is viewed increasingly as a timid, centre-right political force which has so far changed little of substance.

World News
A lawyer for Paula Jones said he was "very optimistic" about the prospect of securing a cash deal with President Clinton.

Obituaries
Betty Carter, who has died of cancer, had a reputation as an instrument-like singer who didn't want anyone to know what was coming next.

Sport
Mike Hakkarinen's victory in the Liverpool grand prix gave him a four-point advantage in the championship.

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Masterstroke or blunder? Puzzle for art experts as Archer plans huge Warhol sale

Former Tory deputy chairman could raise £25 million with 370-work collection – or flood the market, reports Rory Carroll

ART dealers were shocked and puzzled last night after Lord Archer revealed he had quietly built up one of the world's biggest Andy Warhol collections – and planned a sell-off next month which could raise £25 million.

An exquisitely timed masterstroke which taps end-of-the-century emotionalism before recession plunges prices into freefall, said some. A stupendous blunder which will cost the Tory grandee millions by flooding the market and instantly annihilating the current Warhol chic, said others.

Lord Archer remained coy, commenting only to swat suggestions that his novels must be selling poorly. "No, I'm down to my last £100 million." The 43 oils and 328 acrylics, including images of Marilyn Monroe, Chairman Mao and Campbell's soup tins, will be exhibited in batches of 65 at a Bruton Street gallery from October 20.

Last May's £10.5 million sale of Warhol's Orange Marilyn at Sotheby's in New York

is believed to have convinced Lord Archer that the market, which oscillates between viewing Warhol as a genius or a fraud, was ripe.

Thomas Sokolowski, director of the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, said the announcement was bizarre.

"It's a matter of supply and demand. Warhol is doing well right now but this collection is huge, absolutely huge. I'd be shocked to think that even big institutions on Madison Avenue would have as many."

"It makes sense to parse the collection out. Do it over a couple of years in different countries."

Lower profile works for which buyers would have paid premium prices will be spurned because of the glut, said Mr Sokolowski. He predicted that images of icons such as Monroe could fetch £200,000. At the bottom end prices will hover at around £500.

Equally astonished that the former deputy chairman of the Tory party had secretly turned himself into a major league "Warholian", London

dealers hailed the sale as a shrewd cashing-in on Britain's youth culture zeitgeist.

Andrew Lamont, a gallery owner and chairman of the fine arts committee of the Fine Arts and Trade Guild, said Lord Archer had tuned into a millennial spiritualism that valued pop art's energy.

"In the 90s we're a much more caring and emotionally sensitive society. The younger generation of clubbers have brought back a fashion for colour and fun and joy."

"But in the 80s everybody wore black, there was a coolness, things were disciplined, regimented. Money was the God."

By starting to collect Warhols seven years ago, when the legacy of that coolness chilled the value of his work, Lord Archer was thinking ahead, said Mr Lamont. "He's judged it well. With the fashion for retro it seems that if ever he's going to sell that collection now is a good time."

"He's expecting people to pay at the top of the artist's price. Also he's got in ahead of the recession, and art usually suffers the quickest."

Lord Archer employed five researchers to trawl the world in pursuit of works by Warhol, who died in 1987. The collection includes 10 Marylins, 10 Maos, 10 Campbell's soups, three Lenins, four Ronald Reagans and images of Mick Jagger, Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse.

Neil Fairhead, an independent London dealer, said that in recent weeks he and his associates had done a brisk trade in Warhols on the continent and in Hong Kong.

"People do want them. In the past 18 months (demand) has really escalated, though Archer would probably have got an even better price if he had done this six months ago. There's a lot of talk about recession."

Next month's exhibition will also include 28 signed Hockney prints from the artist's private collection.

Dealers predicted most of the collection would be hoovered up by bullish Americans, but Mr Sokolowski urged Lord Archer not to get his hopes up.

"Even institutions aren't able to pay stratospheric prices. For that you need individuals with a fetishistic need to own a particular painting. So all I can say is 'Good luck Jeffrey'."



Andy Warhol's Shot Red Marilyn. Lord Archer has 10 Warhol Marylins in his collection of 42 oils and 328 acrylics



Lord Archer at home. He could raise £25 million with the sale of his Warhol collection. PHOTOGRAPH BY BRENDAN BEHRE

Famous for £25 million

Lord Archer's collection of Warhols includes:
10 Marylins
10 Maos
10 Campbell's soup tins

4 Ronald Reagans
3 Lenins
Plus images of Mick Jagger, Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse

Beast foils police cathunt

Sue Quina

IT was a drama lifted straight from the plot of the Hollywood film. The Fugitive. Police used heat-seeking equipment and warned residents through loudhailers to lock themselves indoors following sightings of a mystery feline bigger than an albatross on the loose on the edge of London.

The extraordinary cathunt covering 40 square miles around Barnet, South Mumps and Potters Bar in south Hertfordshire began after a member of the public reported seeing a puma-like animal in a

populated residential area on Friday afternoon.

Dozens of armed officers were teamed up with RSPCA officials and police helicopters using heat-seeking equipment were drafted into the search for the elusive animal.

Safety concerns were outweighed by the puzzle of how the freshly dubbed "Beast of Barnet" – thought to be either a puma, cougar or American mountain lion – had come to be wandering a London suburb. There have been similar sightings in the past eight years, and police believe the same animal could be involved.

Residents were warned to lock their doors and windows and police used loudhailers to order them to stay indoors.

Two officers involved in the search who spotted the animal described it as "a large brown cat with a very large rope like tail which had a black ring on the end of it. It was a very large brown cat, bigger than an albatross."

Despite appeals for the public to leave the cat alone if spotted and to call 999 immediately, the animal was not described as ferocious. Police who got within 50 yards said it got up, stretched itself and walked away.

The animal was still at large last night, said Chief Superintendent Huw Thornton. "It is like looking for a needle in a haystack."

"But we have had no reports of a large animal attacking people and no reports of livestock being killed, and this is not something which should panic people."

Inspector John Storey of the RSPCA said: "It is going to be feeding on rabbits, small game and possibly muntjac deer. There is an abundance of food for it and it's going to have no problem surviving."

He said it was unlikely to attack humans or household pets, but warned: "If it is hungry enough it will eat anything."

Labour left humiliates leadership

continued from page 1

the vote is a sharp reminder to Millbank and Downing St that the ordinary membership cannot be taken for granted. When Mr Blair took an unprecedented Question and Answer immediately afterwards he took the issue head-on – but made no concessions.

Invoking Neil Kinnock and John Smith's efforts to reform Labour, he said he wanted an "unbroken line of accountability" linking the cabinet to MPs, the party and the country. "You're not the Government's audience. You're part of the show." They must

all go out and sell the government's achievements, Mr Blair insisted.

On policy, including tax cuts and electoral reform, he stood his ground. On how the party conducts itself in government, he lectured his audience politely but firmly. Unlike in the old days, he was heard politely too.

Invoking "one of the great myths of the Labour movement", that leftwing criticism would produce a leftwing government, he said that in reality such criticism produced "a very rightwing government".

To loud applause he de-

clared: "All I can say to you, in the nicest possible way, is we have been there, we've done that. We've got the tee-shirt and we are not going back again."

In the audience was Mr Kinnock, who this month accused Mr Seddon of being "duped" by the hard left he fought in the 1980s.

Among other NEC results announced yesterday, two local government moderates, Londoner Sally Powell, and Sir Jeremy Beecham, former "Mr Newcastle", were elected. Three ministers, nominated by the Government under the new system,

were: Mo Mowlam, Hilary Armstrong, the local government minister, and Ian McCartney, the industry minister.

When MPs' choice of three NEC members, chosen by MPs and MSPs, is announced this week, Dennis Skinner is expected to be one of the winners alongside Clive Soley, chairman of the PLP. Mr Livingston and Diane Abbott will not survive.

Mr Skinner's re-election, at 68, would boost the net left strength on the NEC to five – two more than at present. But the NEC's wider membership will total 50, not 29.



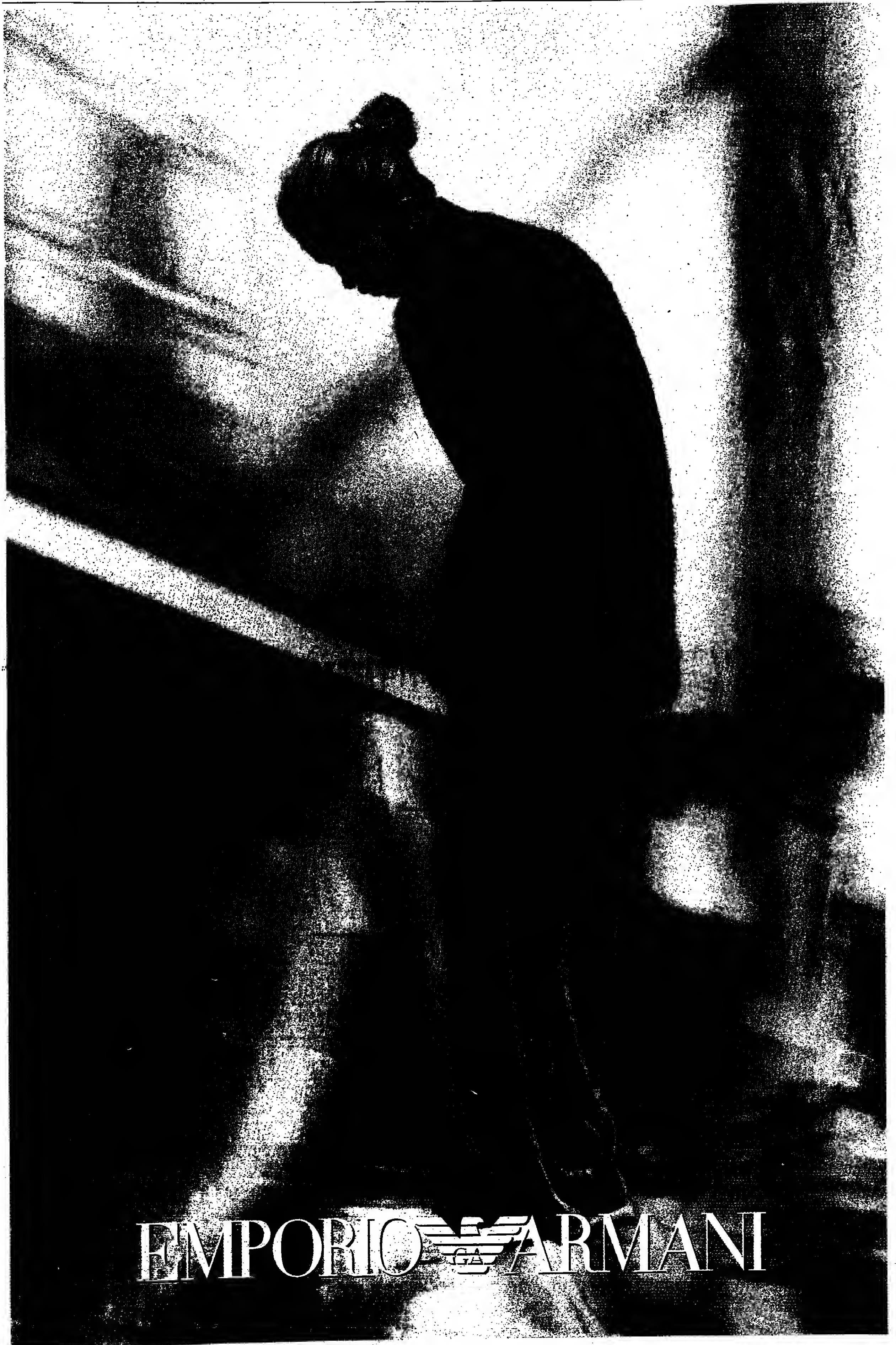
Betty Carter's voice could negotiate most of the nuances and ambiguities lying between the sounds of a coaxing whisper and a gunshot. She was small, alert, funny, with shrewd and mobile features, and she occupied a stage as if it was her living room, or more accurately, her bedroom.

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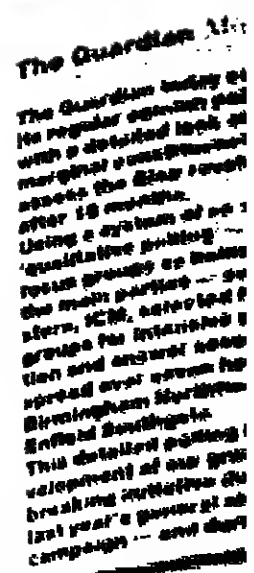
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ICM's findings

Some disagree that George Hatter changed much. But about Patrice Collins. Some insist on his judgment.

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The Guardian today extends its regular opinion polling with a detailed look at two marginal constituencies to assess the Blair revolution after 16 months. Using a system of so-called "qualitative polling" — the focus groups so beloved by the main parties — our pollsters, ICM, selected four groups for intensive question and answer sessions spread over seven hours in Birmingham Northfield and Enfield Southgate. This detailed polling is a development of our ground-breaking initiative during last year's general election campaign — and during the



subsequent Scottish and Welsh devolution referendums — when we regularly tracked public opinion in key constituencies using focus groups.

Strong Blair escapes voters' blame

Peter Hetherington

NEW LABOUR is viewed increasingly as a timid, centre-right political force which, so far, has changed little of substance over the past 16 months, according to research for the Guardian in two key marginals on the eve of the Blackpool conference.

But while many appear disappointed with the Government's performance and want action on key commitments, invariably they are impressed with what they regard as the strong, Thatcherite-style of Tony Blair.

Yet paradoxically, there is lingering mistrust over whether the Prime Minister's image of honesty and sincerity will make a real difference and force a clean policy break with the Tory years.

People seem to see little change apart from policies with a "better gloss and more PR and spin", said Philip, a young, former Tory supporter in north London who backed Blair last year. "He's Margaret Thatcher with a very humane face." Paul, another young, first-time Labour voter said: "I wouldn't say they've broken their promises. It's just that they haven't

ICM's main findings

- Some disappointment that things have not changed much under Labour. Party seen as too cautious. Some felt it was too soon to judge performance.
- Tony Blair seen to be charismatic, accessible and approachable for ordinary people — although lingering mistrust about his honesty and sincerity to deliver real change.
- Concerns about the economy, health and education. Most did not blame Labour.
- Tories seen as non-existent, elitist and out of touch. Done little to regain lost support.
- William Hague seen as ineffectual. In Enfield, Portillo disliked as much as Hague.
- Image of Liberal Democrats as a hit irrelevant, and a wasted vote, continues. Many ex-Tories voting Lib Dem in 1997 are considering switching to Labour next time.

got round to doing them." The contrast between voters' perceptions of New Labour's positive style and its negative substance, emerged in the focus groups selected in the marginal constituencies of Enfield Southgate, the north London seat lost by Michael Portillo last year, and Birmingham Northfield.

The former defence secretary turned television personality — and future Tory leadership contender if he finds a way back to the Commons — can draw little comfort from the findings. Mr Portillo is held in as much contempt as William Hague, widely dismissed as a "joke", a "wimp", and a "plonker" by even staunch Tory backers.

Facing no real opposition from the Tories, and with Liberal Democrats often thought irrelevant — our findings suggested a potential switch from Lib Dem to Labour among younger voters in Northfield who backed Paddy Ashdown last year — Mr Blair can take great comfort on two fronts: his strong leadership and his success in convincing voters that the wave of recent job

losses is outside his Government's control.

But older Labour voters have clearly lost faith in a party which has repositioned itself on the centre-right. "They just do not seem to be interested in their real supporters," lamented Gill in Northfield. "I'm a single parent with a daughter going through university and we get no help whatsoever."

"I don't trust Blair," added Dave. "I'm disappointed. There are no jobs, even when you are qualified. I'm 48, I have 14 City and Guilds [qualifications], and I can't get a job, so I have to work for myself. He's not looking after his own people."

But these critics, who are probably representative of other, disillusioned Labour traditionalists in old industrial areas, have "nowhere else to go". Protest could be confined to abstention. Overall, Mr Blair is widely regarded as charismatic, accessible, and "in touch with ordinary people."

Yet some of our respondents who held him up as a strong leader still thought he was "bland" and "non-committal" on many important issues. "When he was elected I thought it would be quite good ... a right-of-centre Labour party [but] I regard him as more of a charlatan," said Philip, a former Tory voter. Tony, a young convert to New Labour, added: "He said things people wanted to hear but he hasn't backed them up to any great extent."

"I'm very disappointed really," chipped in Paul, a third convert. "I know things don't change overnight but we are ... handing over interest rate policy [to the Bank of England monetary committee]." He has first-hand experience of a failure to deliver, having had two NHS operations cancelled, but he still "admires" Mr Blair.

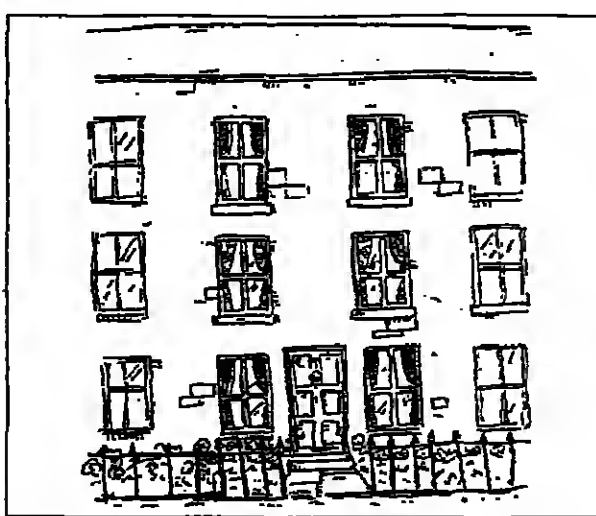
Another convert, Lloyd, said the Prime Minister had not been put to the test. "It will be interesting to see how he handles a recession." He gave Blair "slightly more plusses than minuses".

Yet while people were often deeply concerned about Labour's failure to improve public services, particularly health, they did not blame the Government for a looming recession and possible job losses. News that Mr Blair could not save jobs at the doomed microchip plant in his own constituency, Sedgefield, appears to have convinced people like Gary, a Northfield car worker, that economies are beyond the control of any one country.

He said: "I don't think my job will be there in five years ... all the new people are on six-month contracts and they'll be out on their ears." He blamed events outside the control of Mr Blair for a looming crisis in Britain's industrial heartlands.

Our findings underline Mr Blair's success in repositioning Labour on the centre-right and capturing a new, middle-England constituency. Underlying support for the Prime Minister, if not the wider Government, remains strong. But remove Mr Blair, and the New Labour revolution will flop. He is seen as a one-man band; other senior ministers are rarely, if ever, mentioned.

In the words of David, a chartered surveyor and older, Conservative voter, in Enfield: "Labour consists of one person — Blair. He's able to sway people with his oratory. But the people around him haven't a clue what to do ..."



How voters view the parties — clockwise, from top left, Labour as an Islington town house or six-bedroom detached; Conservative as a three-bed suburban semi, or something more 'massive'

ILLUSTRATIONS: IAN JACKSON

From people's party to the nouveau riche: how voters view Labour's rise in value

Peter Hetherington

IT HAS been a long, rocky ideological road from the council house to the suburban semi — and now the flashy, detached home deep in middle-England, or the elegant Islington terrace.

But the transformation from people's party to New Labour — and the nouveau riche — now seems complete, according to the findings of the four Guardian focus groups.

Asked to think of a political party as a house, our respondents in Birmingham were in no doubt that Labour represented "big, detached, six-bedroom houses with a long drive on a good road". Parked outside would be a Rover or a Jag.

The house would have red roses in the front garden, there would be thick carpets inside, a Labrador on the mat and "Lord Irvine" style wallpaper throughout — a reference to the Lord Chancellor's expensive decorative tastes.

According to the findings from Enfield, Labour's typical house was seen as a Victorian three-storey terrace in Islington with marble floors, well-kept front garden, and Oasis waiting from an expensive sound system. If there wasn't a vintage E-type Jag, there would be a Mercedes or Daimler. "More likely a Rover at the front and a Daimler round the back," said Philip, a young Labour convert.

By contrast, the Tory house in Birmingham would be "massive", with a long drive and electric gates, and Rolls-Royce or Jag. Inside, a pin-striped Tory might be "knocking off someone else's wife" — an indication that sleaze still forms a perception of the party. Some felt the house would be up for repossession.

The young Enfield focus group selected by ICM, all former Tory voters, thought the Tory house might be most similar to their own — "a three-bed semi, modern and nice" on a new estate, with a Moped or Vectra outside. And the Lib Dem house? "Tidy terrace, or a country cottage" for humpkins growing organic veg.



EMPORIO ARMANI



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Arrest of Anwar spurs solidarity

John Sweeney in Kuala Lumpur, and agencies

Leaders of four Malaysian parties and more than a dozen non-governmental organisations held a joint rally yesterday to press for the repeal of the draconian law used to detain the sacked deputy prime minister and dissident leader Anwar Ibrahim.

Although the authorities have banned all public meetings, no police were seen at the rally, held at the local headquarters of the Islamic fundamentalist opposition Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) in Gombak, a town about 10 miles from Kuala Lumpur.

The protest was led by the Democratic Action Party, the Parti Rakyat Malaysia and the National Socialist party. Earlier the police thwarted their attempt to launch a new movement, called the Coalition for People's Democracy, in a Kuala Lumpur hotel. The police refused a permit and the hotel management locked the hall.

The group announced a 10-point joint declaration which includes the right to freedom of speech and assembly, and the right to a fair trial and impartial hearing in a public court of law. It also called for the repeal of all legislation infringing human rights, including the Internal Security Act (ISA).

Some observers speculated that the prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad may declare a state of emergency.

Mr Anwar has vanished from public view since his arrest. The regime accused him of sodomy, but neither Dr Mahathir nor the police have produced any evidence in court.

The meeting heard a message from Mr Anwar's wife, whom police had reportedly kept away. "Day to day we are waiting and wondering whether Brother Anwar will be brought to court. We do not seek anything other than Anwar being produced in court and given a fair trial," it said.

In the past Dr Mahathir has exploited ethnic divisions between the majority Malay and

minority Chinese populations, but the presence of politicians from both communities on the same platform was one indication that his hold on power is weakening.

The majority of the protesters were Malay Muslims supporters of PAS, who have been outraged by the unsubstantiated sodomy accusations against Mr Anwar and his detention under the ISA.

The head of PAS, Fadzil Mohammed Noor, quoted the UN Declaration of Human Rights when he excoriated the ISA and the corruption of the Mahathir regime.

Syed Husin Ali, a leftwing politician who shared a cell with Mr Anwar when they were detained under the ISA in the 1970s, joked that 90 per cent of Dr Mahathir's cabinet was guilty of adultery, to hoots of laughter from the crowd. A member of the mainly Chinese Democratic Action Party also mocked Dr Mahathir and his regime, to shouts of agreement from the mainly Malay audience.

It looks as though the opposition has finally found a cause on which it can unite.



A man in Calcutta works on a clay statue of the Hindu god Ganesha for India's four-day festival of Durga Puja, celebrating the triumph of good over evil. PHOTOGRAPH: MADU KUMAR

Zealots hound writer on mercy visit to Dhaka

Arshad Mahmud in Dhaka

SALMAN RUSHDIE may be savouring freedom in London, but the Bangladeshi feminist writer Taslima Nasrin was in hiding from both Islamic fundamentalists and police yesterday.

Four years after she was hounded out of the country by religious zealots, Ms Nasrin, who returned to Dhaka secretly to visit her dying mother, may be forced to flee again.

Her nights are sleepless with anxiety, her lawyer said. "She's deeply concerned and has sought our advice on what to do now."

There have been protests by Muslim fundamentalists since the news of her return broke last week.

According to some reports, the authorities have advised her to leave to avoid embroiling the government in a controversy which would distract its attention from pressing efforts to deal with the aftermath of the recent floods.

Several fundamentalist parties have organised

marches demanding her execution. They have also criticised Sheikh Hasina's government for being equivocal about her whereabouts.

Ms Nasrin earned the wrath of the fundamentalists with an interview in an Indian newspaper in early 1994 in which she was quoted as criticising the Koran for being unfair to women. She says she was misquoted.

She became internationally known after an obscure religious group called Soldiers of the Prophet put a price on her head.



Taslima Nasrin: Advised to leave the country

News in brief

Jones lawyer banks on deal with Clinton

A LAWYER for Paula Jones said yesterday he was "very optimistic" about the prospect of securing a cash deal with President Clinton in return for dropping all aspects of her sexual harassment case. "It benefits everybody to settle at this point," David Pyke said in a television interview.

Mrs Jones alleges that the US president asked her for oral sex in a Little Rock hotel in 1991, when he was governor of Arkansas. Her appeal against a lower court's dismissal of the case is due to be heard on October 20.

Her lawyers have asked for \$1 million from Mr Clinton, who is believed to have offered \$500,000. Both sides have hinted that a deal could come within days, which would free Mr Clinton to concentrate on his main legal goal, averting impeachment by Congress for the Lewinsky affair. — *Martin Kettle, Washington.*

Neutral Austria blocks France

AUSTRIA'S coalition government decided yesterday, after a fierce internal debate about joining Nato, to maintain its neutral status by denying France permission to move troops and military equipment across its territory for military exercises in Slovakia.

The defence and foreign ministries had approved a right of passage, but on Saturday Chancellor Viktor Klima's office blocked the decision, which it said would contradict Austria's neutrality. — *Martin Walker, Vienna.*

Blast victims net widens

THOUSANDS more people than initially identified deserve compensation and assistance after the August 7 bombing of the United States embassy in Nairobi, in which 256 people died and more than 5,000 were injured, aid organisations say.

The International Committee of the Red Cross and the Kenyan National Bomb Disaster Committee said they had underestimated the number of dependants affected by not taking account of polygamy and extended families. They have sent counsellors and doctors to rural areas to trace dependants. — *Lucy Hannan, Nairobi.*

Triathletes' frogmarch



Spectators on the French Riviera watch 1,700 competitors sporting wetsuits and goggles start the 1998 Nice Triathlon from Nice beach yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: LIONEL CRONNEAU

Gas blast at Majorca cafe

AT LEAST 50 people were injured yesterday when an apparent gas explosion caved in the roof of a cafe on the Spanish Mediterranean island of Majorca, officials said.

The blast, believed to have been caused by a ruptured propane tank, ripped through the Cafe Cappuccino on the waterfront in Palma de Majorca. Ten of the injured were in serious condition, an emergency services spokeswoman said.

Forty people, including at least six foreigners, were admitted to local hospitals. Medical officials said two Dutch tourists were among the injured. The Foreign Office was checking reports that four Britons were injured. — *Reuters, Palma de Majorca.*

Please don't book me, son

IT WAS the perfect excuse to a traffic policeman about to issue a ticket for a routine offence. "You can't do that, I'm your dad," Kelly Benitez, a Los Angeles policeman, had heard bizarre excuses before, but when the motorist told him his first name and that of his mother, he was convinced.

Kelly Benitez, aged 29, later confirmed that the driver he had pulled over, Paul Benitez, aged 49, was his long-lost father. The men had tried to find each other over the years and now plan a family reunion. — *Christopher Reed, Los Angeles.*

ETA youths break truce

Adela Gooch in San Sebastián

IN THE first act of separatist violence since the terror group ETA declared a ceasefire 10 days ago, hooded Basque youths set alight the offices of the Spanish Socialist Party at the weekend. A security guard was badly

burnt in the attack. "They threw their firebombs and then dragged me out into the street kicking and screaming and telling me they'd kill me if I moved," he said.

Leaders of the mainstream Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) said the attack could have been retaliation for the attack on an office belonging to Herri Batasuna last week.

EMPORIO ARMANI

Comment

e-mail

David Sharrock
@Jerusalem

THIS year I will get it right. I have laid in supplies. No way will I drive my car on Yom Kippur. Let me explain what happened last year on Israel's holiest holiday. As a new resident I had been briefed about what to do and what not to do on the Day of Atonement. First off, you don't drive. Nobody drives. There are no radio or television broadcasts. You don't eat or drink from sunset to sunset. The wearing of leather and jewellery, make-up, taking a shower, sex with your partner, all are forbidden.

While none of these activities is legally enforced and doubtless some people cut a few corners, nobody messes with the car ban. If you do you can get into a pretty nasty situation. Like the neighbour who had a concrete block dropped on his car from a bridge.

So of course I wasn't going to go near the car except that I was suddenly knocked sideways by the worst attack of asthma in years. Searching for an inhaler through unpacked belongings only made matters worse. I tried various breathing exercises, all to no avail.

At three in the morning I cracked. Surely at this hour there will be nobody around to be offended. The duty hospital was on the other side of Jerusalem. Gasping for air, I climbed into the car. Starting the engine sounded like a clap of thunder. Turning on the headlights felt like powering up the Batman call sign into the cloudy skies of Gotham City.

But nobody stirred, so I inched out of Caspi Street and into Hebron Road. Whereupon my car was swallowed up by a crowd of two to three hundred men and women, walking purposefully and silently on the centre of what is normally one of Jerusalem's busiest arteries.

The car began to rock. The thumping on the roof and the kicking at the doors grew louder. I knew they were cursing, but because it was in Hebrew I couldn't hear in what form of torture they were planning once they got me out of the vehicle. I thought about opening a window and explaining politely in English that I was on my way to hospital, but realised I probably couldn't push enough air out through my mouth to make word-shapes, so desperate was I for oxygen. I gave it all of another second's thought and then stepped on the accelerator. To say that it was like the parting of the Red Sea probably would be sacrilegious, but suddenly the way ahead beckoned and the rear mirror showed a shrinking lynch mob. At the hospital staff put me on a ventilator and tutted at the risk I had taken.

Jerusalem is a holy city, to its Jewish, Muslim and fewer Christian residents, but everyone in Israel knows it is also becoming a more intolerant place. Just ask the secular Israelis decamping to Tel Aviv and the coast.

When a daughter of the war hero Moshe Dayan was photographed sunbathing on a beach on Yom Kippur some years ago the charge was universal. So tomorrow I will stay at home, with a medical kit to hand.

Dear Tony, this week please put some passion back in our romance

Polly Toynbee



SITTING on the train bound for Blackpool, four and a bit hours, change at Preston, Virgin on the (ridiculous), I examine the Labour Party pass round my neck plastered with Somerset field ads reading "Serving the Community. Nationwide". Why, I wonder, do I feel low about Labour? There really is no good reason. This is undoubtedly the best government by far that I have ever known. So why?

Perhaps it's just the mid-air lull. Journalists are forever fidgety, yearning for action, preferably scandal and rows. We, and other fair-weather friends, are not to be trusted in the dull days — because we need news, always something new. Labour's early plans are already old, all mapped, from the genuinely radical devolution referenda to the imaginative masterworks of social policy now rolling out. But time takes its toll, and some of the shine has worn off our leader. The romance is over and day-to-day marriage wears on. We don't bring him flowers any more: slippers and suppers in front of the television can never match that first fine carefree rapture of May 1, 1997. Inevitable, the marriage guidance counsellors say, be satisfied with contentment, you should be so lucky, and yet, and yet...

Tony Blair seems to sense that something is missing. Some lack of passion in our lives. So his Fabian pamphlet *The Third Way* opens: "I have always believed that politics is first and foremost about ideas. Without a powerful commitment to goals and values, governments are rudder-

less and ineffective, however large their majorities". This is a good husband, a conscientious, considerate New Man, the kind who keeps asking us in focus groups how it is for us? He does the washing-up, undogmatic, pragmatic, caring about people, cautious on costs. He's trying to dig a new garden out of old unemployed rubbish, while he puts up enticing new shelves for business and modernises the living room. A good family man, he is non-judgmental about the single mother next door, helping with her childcare. He worries about the children's education. Household finances are in good order, unless knocked sideways by things beyond his control.

So what's missing? Is it fair to ask for more from this ideal husband? Is it frivolous to ask for something brave and unexpected once in a while, something risky that springs unbidden from a thirst for justice? His *Third Way* reminds us, a little smugly, of all the bad things he is not doing. The synopsis of a Sunday morning, he prides himself that he is not selfish, greedy, individualistic and uncaring like his neighbour buffing up the Jag in the driveway on the right. But nor is he fearlessly relying on the big state and nationalisation, nor jealously coveting that rich man's Jag, like his neighbour to the left. He's proud not to be either of them, but that's not enough, and he knows it. Why else does he exhibit this need for clearer self-definition?

Surprise us, Tony, just a bit. This week make a speech to rethink some of the fires of May 1. The synthetic passion of his past conference

speeches won't work. No more religious "vows" and "pledges", or sobs in the voice of a hundred millions of Britain, (this nation of ours), something more than "modernising", "flexible, innovative, and forward-looking". That was fine for the tense pre-election conference of '96 and just about OK for the triumphalist celebration last year. This year give us something brave.

Why not start with a paean of praise for Europe, an unequivocal bid for hearts and minds to counter the £20 million just poured into the coffers of the Eurosceptic campaign? Give us strong leadership on this the most important thing the government will ever do. No one knows when Britain may have to rush to enter the single currency: it may not wait to suit Labour's electoral convenience, so the people have to be prepared for it. But by whom? No good waiting for the captains of industry to do the job instead they grow anxious at the lack of bold advocacy from the Government.

GIVEN the lack of leadership on this, it's amazing that half the population is pro-EMU, despite the rabid Euroscepticism of the overwhelming numbers of newspapers sold. When Blair last made a speech tiptoeing closer to Europe, the Sun's front page blasted him as the Most Dangerous Man in Britain. But he should take heart from that — nothing terrible happened. He is stronger than the Sun, stronger than all the Murdoch press, plus the Mail and Telegraph. He can afford to face down bullies who think they have him in the palm of

his hand. Think James Stewart in *It's a Wonderful Life*. Once he learns to stand up to paper tigers. Who knows, once he does — and some day over Europe he'll have to — maybe he will find the nerve to draw up media ownership legislation to prevent any one media bully owning too much. That would add new vigour to his speech.

Once he found he was not in thrall to the front page of the Mail, he could start to tell the voters to tell them they are not in thrall to the front page of the Mail. He has just threatened to renew Labour's no-more-income-tax pledge for the next election too. That means he will finally cap his ambitions: no real redistribution, no long-term increase in public spending. It is simply lying to the voters to tell them they can have more public transport, a better NHS and good education without paying for it. Time for Blair to tell the obvious truth — you get what you pay for: voters have to choose between low tax or effective spending. The rest is tinkering. Now, I will happily munch all these words if any of the above feature in the Prime Minister's speech.

Is this fair? Who ever said this good husband should be perfect? Knocking the establishment is as instinctive — and sometimes frivolous — in journalists as it is among left wing activists. A trip last week to Washington, where Clinton is suggesting it out with Gingrich, should be a salutary reminder that standing up for the better against the far worse is what serious politics is about. Letting the best be the enemy of the good is self-indulgence... and yet, and yet.

If the papers are wriggling, they only have themselves to blame

The squirm that turned

Peter Preston



WHATEVER became of the Giant Squirm? I know that start-the-week columns are supposed to look forward, not back. I know that seven days in politics (and journalism) equal eternity. But how did this particular Squirm turn so completely? The squirming, you'll recall, was everywhere. There was a lot of it in the Sun, allied to much "smirking like a naughty schoolboy". The guy "was a slippery, wriggling, cheating, blustering huckster".

The Express saw him "throwing a tantrum" in a "panicky, disgusted and furious" four hours of "angry, evasive ramblings". The Mail, chucked in "castles" for luck. The Telegraph wrote eagerly of this "devastating indictment", and the editor of its Sunday sister was as crisply assured about coming events as ever.

When they see the President's damaging attempts at evasion, then even the Comeback Kid will have gone beyond the point of no return. There was more, much more, of this stuff in almost every British newspaper; and more, much more, from every television and radio station. We were not alone. We reflected precisely the super-charged sense of nemesis which America's media brought to its citizenry. Mr Clinton — storming out at one red-faced point, railing and fuming — was utterly doomed. Sex, lies, videotapes: the mantra of apocalypse.

Except, of course, that it wasn't like that. He didn't storm anywhere. He asked politely, after an hour, for a bathroom break. He did not — to an almost uncanny extent — lose his cool. He coloured a touch when they got to cigars and shifted in his chair (maybe a virtual squirm). But abuse, anger, flashes of rampant temper? There was zero intolerance. He smiled in adversity from time to time (maybe a virtual smirk).

What happened? Reporters and pundits, gathered before the tape rolled, were so damned magisterial. This was the end of the road for the President, the moment when the final tissue of mendacity was ripped away. But it wasn't, of course. And the heart of the matter ought to bleed with contrition — their contrition.

None of them had seen the video which they described so vividly. None of their judgments was first hand. They relied on other people who'd seen it, or said they'd seen it. The evidence in this court of public opinion was spin and chatter, hastily clad in the robes of infallible truth. You might call it a lie founded in other lies; but, as we know, only the President lies. The rest of us are merely misled.

That, in conscience and on reflection, is bad enough. But what has followed, for the most part, is still worse. Some journalists, like the dear old Sun, had gone so far in the type of doom before they, or anyone connected with them, saw the tape that they were bound to carry on lathering regardless. They couldn't wind back without looking silly; and since the Sun can only look bold and dynamic (and never, ever silly) they just pretended that this was the performance as trailed.

SOME journalists and broadcasters, discomfited by the American voters' dogged refusal to react as predicted, indeed to tell the pollsters in ever greater numbers that they wanted to keep their President intact and unimpeached, did the predictable thing. They blamed the voters for their crassness and crudeness; they berated a "sick society" which declined to do what the pundits told them. When in doubt, dish it out.

But the most significant play of all — the one that examined the case for saying "sorry" and

swiftly dismissed it — was passing the parcel of blame. So OK, we hadn't actually seen the video we described in such rabid detail: we relied on our "sources". Which sources were those?

Well, Republican sources, who might have had a vested interest in piling on the agony, now we come to think about it. And Starr legal sources (same vests, same interests). But the clinching sources, the ones we really blame for this fiasco, were White House spinners. Ye gods, they spun us the yarn of pending humiliation in order to make the real four hours look tame against expectation. Administration in new vicious deception horror.

All journalists (and their readers) should pause over this fillet of stinky fish. No sources, naturally, are named. Ken Starr can dump thousands of pages of specifics into the public domain, but the chips who fill in the background bank in anonymity. Total disclosure meets total obfuscation.

But let us suppose that the buck passes: know what happened, as opposed once again to hearing it second hand. Let us suppose that some White House briefers did over-egg the omelette of coming disaster. It means they think that the gentlemen with open mouths and open notebooks?

Heck tidings. It tells us that this mature, worldly crowd of wise men and women can't see a spin when it hops them on the nose. It means they think that "friends" of the President confide their innermost fears to the nearest reporter. Of Newt, Of Ken, Of Bill — purveyors of unaltered veracity to the masses. That, on a second reflection, is the loudest excuse in the pantheon.

I wrote last week that, when the squalor of the Monica madness had passed, the American press would awake in a spasm of self-important remorse. Brothers, it's wake-up time.



All journalists (and their readers) should pause over this fillet of stinky fish

Mrs Lewinsky is a three-dimensional figure of a person. Ken Starr is high on evasion which doesn't help his cause. (He's a lawyer; he's only hot for the technical truth of his twisty trade, not "going out of his way" to help us.) Linda keeps tripping over her own feet and malevolencies. When Mr Gingrich invokes the sanctity of the process, you can see his conk turning a Pinocchio corner.

Slippery? The slopes are everywhere. Wriggling? It seems to come naturally. Cheating? Try second-hand licks disguised as first-hand testimony. Blustering? Only when caught out — because someone else bought the pup. Abusing? As in Pass the Adjectives. Huckstering? What else has this grim spectacle been about?

And that, alas, is only the media. Perhaps Presidents get the press they deserve, in which case there's a symmetry to ponder. But have the American people deserved all this? No; and we know that, because they keep telling us so.

The press plead mitigation. They were cleverer than us. We got over-excited. The defence of the credulous fool. Should Right, because time presses. There's the Jenkins' report on FR coming, the formula everybody recites as fact, the imminent betrayal of Ashdown, the Cabinet split. Jolly pulsating and it must be true, mustn't it? We gotta source.

So there is an alternative

Liz Davies



THE results in the elections for Labour's NEC send a clear message to the Government: Labour Party members want an open, democratic party, where dissent is valued and where voices from the grassroots are listened to with respect.

They also want the elimination of poverty and the promotion of equality to be the Labour government's top priorities. That means boosting pensions and public sector pay, improving welfare benefits and taking action now to halt the tide of job losses. The NEC

results reinforces the messages coming out of this year's TUC, for example, that the Private Finance Initiative is a threat to public services and a bad deal for the taxpayer.

No one can now deny that the policies of our alliance are supported by mainstream party members and I very much hope our leadership will respond positively and constructively to the messages coming from the grassroots.

Take the case of the minimum wage — one of the Labour government's major achievements. It is essential that we remember where that policy came from. The minimum wage was the result of years of pressure from below, from Labour Party and trade union members — it did not come from think tanks, nor from focus groups or PR consultants.

too concrete. The aim of the Grassroots Alliance has been to try to re-open those channels from below, to ensure that the voices of people who are not rich or famous enough to command media attention are heard at the highest levels of the Labour Party.

Unfortunately, the minimum wage has been set far too low — £7,000 per year for

for Labour Party members is that the low rate, the restricted entitlement and the failure to introduce a formula came about as a direct result of pressure on the Government from big business, which also succeeded in imposing the 40 per cent threshold for trade union recognition.

No wonder, this week-end's opinion poll showed a

The minimum wage was the result of years of pressure from below — it did not come from think tanks, the front bench, focus groups or PR consultants

a full-time job is still poverty pay — and entitlement is too restricted. The failure to introduce a formula — preferably half median male earnings — prevents the low-paid from sharing in the fruits of economic growth and requires them to go cap in hand to the Government each year even to keep up with inflation.

majority of people feel Tony Blair is closer to big business than to ordinary people. That verdict has been echoed by the results in the NEC election.

Despite the common sense and popularity of the policies promoted by the Grassroots Alliance, the media have treated us as unrepresentative extremists. After our resounding

victory, I hope journalists and Labour politicians alike will cease to treat us as pariahs, and recognise that we speak for a substantial section of the Labour movement.

The battle for democracy in the Labour Party is a vital part of the battle for democracy in society as a whole. On the NEC, we will do our best to ensure that debate in the party is conducted in an open, tolerant and inclusive manner and involved in decision-making. We will certainly be doing our utmost to ensure that London Labour Party members are permitted to select their candidate for mayor without interference.

Throughout this election, Millbank tower and its friends in the media have engaged in a disinformation campaign that has damaged the reputation of the Labour Party and compromised the dignity and the democracy of Labour's internal debate. In contrast, we in the Grassroots Alliance fought an honest

and principled campaign around our shared priorities. I am proud to have been part of that campaign.

We were massively outspent by the leadership slate, we were openly opposed by the party hierarchy and smeared in the press. My politics and my commitment to the Labour Party were grossly misrepresented by the party's General Secretary, former leader and the Prime Minister. Columnists in various papers heaped insults on myself and my fellow candidates. I am proud that party members saw through the falsehoods and distortions and voted solidly for a socialist alternative.

Perhaps the most encouraging lesson of these elections is that it is possible for a group of ordinary party members, without big money or celebrity spokespersons, to challenge the establishment, and win.

Liz Davies is one of four Grassroots Alliance members whose election to Labour's NEC was announced yesterday

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Grassroots victory

It will be good for Blair

THE LABOUR high command had its answer ready. "So what?" said the voice of Downing Street, on hearing the news that a quartet of troublesome dissenters had burrowed their way into the institution that used to be described as "Labour's ruling body": the national executive committee. The official line insists Downing Street is "astonishingly relaxed" by yesterday's first item in Blackpool — the news that four of the six NEC places determined by party members had gone to the left-leaning Grassroots Alliance. The bosses say they don't care that a loose coalition of non-loyalists came out ahead of the Millbank-approved slate, Members First. It might be annoying, they admit, to deal with the likes of Liz Davies — the left-winger barred last year by the NEC from standing as a parliamentary candidate — but not much more.

Strictly speaking, they might be right. The NEC is hardly the body it once was; modernisation has made it all but power-

less. Besides, even if the four Grassrooters are joined by a couple of independent-minded trade unionists and Dennis Skinner from the MPs section, the awkward squad will still lose every vote the NEC takes. Their best case is to lose by 25 votes to 7, rather than 32 to zero.

But yesterday's result is not nothing. Just as they did last year, when they chose Ken Livingstone over Peter Mandelson, Labour party members have sent a message to Tony Blair and the architects of the New Labour project. They support the Government, they're delighted it's in power instead of the Tories — but they're ready to hear other voices, too. By granting first place to a thoughtful radical like Tribune editor Mark Seddon — they signalled their faith in internal debate. Diversity of opinion is not a threat, but a sign of vitality; for in politics, conformity is close to morbidity. If the NEC was to take its decisions on unanimous votes, Mr Blair would live an easier life — but he would be the leader of an empty shell, not a genuine political movement.

That was why the Guardian welcomed the arrival of the Grassroots Alliance earlier in the summer: prompted by the belief that debate is better than uniformity, argument better than control. The great irony of yesterday's proceedings was that, once the NEC results were in, Mr Blair proved the

point himself perfectly. The Prime Minister took to the podium, removed his jacket and faced the delegates' questions. Advance billing suggested the question and answer session might be a bit of a North Korea number, with stage-managed, softball plaudits laid at the feet of the Great Leader. But it didn't turn out that way. The first question came from a delegate who said she was looking forward to having a good time in Blackpool, but that she didn't really believe conference would achieve much. Another asked if there was not a large, economic philosophy-shaped hole in the Third Way. One more wondered why every name-tag, every document-pack and every fringe meeting seemed to have a commercial sponsor: is Labour a party for sale?

These were real questions, chosen at random. And far from crumbling under the pressure of non-controlled debate, Mr Blair seemed to thrive on it. He was confident, funny and persuasive. His argument that Labourites should not delude themselves that they have a choice between the Blair government and the Labour government of their dreams — for the real choice is between Tony Blair and the Tories — was effective. So was his "been there, done that" dismissal of Labour's fratricidal past. As a tacit rebuttal of the NEC results it was smart: reminding activists that he would

not tolerate any repeat of the bitter 1980s. But, paradoxically, it was also a reminder of why yesterday's election of the Grassroots Four may help, rather than hurt, Tony Blair. For politicians, like politics, need a good argument even when they think otherwise.

The cyber bard

The play's the thing

A PLAY by any other hand would surely read as fair. The news that Edward III has been accepted as being "largely" from the pen of William Shakespeare by its inclusion in the authoritative Arden Shakespeare edition doesn't change the world or make the play itself any better or worse than it was last week. But it is difficult to avoid the feeling that literature is subtly enriched by the announcement. It wasn't enough to complete satisfy Eric Sams, a 72-year-old retired civil servant of Croydon, Surrey, even though it marks the climax of 30 years of campaigning. Mr Sams maintains that Edward III was written entirely by the Bard. Nor will it satisfy Oxfordians who will simply claim Edward III as another work by Robert de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, who is the leading pretender to Shakespearean

authorship now that Bacon, Marlowe, Jonson and others have fallen a bit by the wayside. Oxfordians claim that hardly anything is known about Shakespeare himself and least of all how the Stratford grammar school boy managed to acquire the erudition and courtly experience that the plays are dripping with. Only the Earl of Oxford fits the bill, they say. They have produced folios of textual references (and a 1,270-page book) to back their case, dismissed as phony evidence by True Believers.

At the very least Shakespeare would have been flattered to know that the debate about his existence is now being conducted in cyberspace, where more things are happening than were dreamed of in his philosophy. Computer matching was used to verify textual similarities between Edward III and (other) plays, while the debate about authorship rages over the Internet, where Shakespearean and Oxfordian websites have turned the whole world into an electronic stage. There are nearly half a million Shakespeare-related sites on the World Wide Web ranging from complete texts of all the plays (which can be downloaded at no cost) and erudite criticisms to yet new graphological theories that it was really Bacon after all. New technology — and controversy — have proved nothing but a boon for Shakespeare's international worth.

Letters to the Editor

Some tips on appliances

RE Matthew Norman's problem with his short lead for the electric kettle, I can reveal that all electric kettles have short leads. With up to two kilowatts of power and at 240 volts by 13 amps, it is unwise to approach a cold tap with a plugged-in kettle. The tap will perform as a perfect earth, and the chances of electrocution for the person holding both tap and kettle are high. Stephen Lufman, Taversham, Kent.

YOU don't need to go to Czechoslovakia to find a phonetic language (Letters, September 18). Here in Wales my seven-year-old, who at three spoke no Welsh, is able to read better in Welsh than in English because it is a phonetic language. Hilary Matthews, Uwchygareg, Machynlleth.

RE the death of Flo Jo (Analysis, September 23): if it is suggested her work records be disallowed on the grounds of reported drug abuse, we believe that many other old records, such as Sgt Pepper, Dark Side of the Moon, Are you Experienced?, Pet Sounds, Coltrane's early work with Miles Davis etc, should not be allowed to stand as they were probably produced under the influence of drugs. M A Ferguson, St Albans, London.

LAUREL, when I fancy a bet, I check the horses which Chris Hawkins and Top Form recommend and call up my bookmaker. The problem is that I keep winning. My bookmaker is getting concerned — what can he be doing wrong? William Simpson, Barking, Essex.

DO all Cockayne get up Carling's nose? (Carling confusion split over partner, September 26) Paul Thompson, London.

Please include a postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a daytime telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. Please give a reference to relevant articles.

Spectre haunting Labour

THE extreme reaction of the Labour leadership in recent weeks to the threat of NEC places falling to the left has mystified outsiders. The mystery starts to clear when you note Michael White's case for requiring political parties operating under a list system to follow internal democratic procedures (Analysis, September 24).

The resistance to the New Labour establishment consists not only of a left that has taken on the internal democratic agenda — possibly for tactical reasons — but of a radical democratic wing that by any past definition would be regarded as right-wing. The party's real fear is membership accountability. The radical democrats want PR to be contingent on internal democracy. Otherwise, it will simply not be worth having.

A choice between ideologically driven lists constructed by professional political fixers is no choice at all for the MP or other office-holder who has to please some central office bureaucrat rather than his or her local constituents in order to remain in office.

Only radical democrats in all three main parties can halt the systematic substitution of oligarchy for true democratic accountability. If PR comes, radical democratic

socialists may well, one day, form another entity rather than connive in this creeping decay into national populism. Tim Pendry, Former co-ordinator, Grassroots Alliance, London.

MICHAEL White is unfair to Jack Straw. If I am correctly informed, Straw was convinced by the case for an "open" list system for PR elections to the European Parliament, which would have given voters a limited choice among candidates on party lists. I understand Home Office press releases were ready to go out announcing lists would be "open". But Millbank intervened and Straw was obliged to go back to closed lists. Given that greater party control over the selection of candidates is an inherent weakness of PR, more thought should be given to the registration of political parties, which extends voter choice to the MP and devolved mechanisms of internal party democracy on the choice of candidates and other matters. Stuart Weir, Democratic Audit, University of Essex.

ON the last day for voting in the NEC elections, 700 carried an advertisement stat-

ing "Join Labour now and have your say". When my post arrived I thought "goddie, I can have my say twice", as it contained a second set of NEC ballot papers. But somehow this did not seem right so I phoned Millbank only to be told by "an agent", that because of my unique voting number I would be found out if I voted again. Expressing fury at the incompetence and waste involved, I was told "we know duplicates have gone out, we are sorry; we can't tell you how much this cost". After near 40 years of Labour membership I am now, for the first time, seriously considering resigning. If they cannot run a ballot, how can we trust them to run the country? Diane Munday, St Albans, Herts.

SO Mark Steel (Parasite Yourself, September 23) thinks the electorate failed to vote Labour into power three times because of Neil Kinnock. Does Mr Steel really believe that if the party and been led by Tony Benn and had presented a Marxist economic policy and local authorities were to be run by the Militant tendency it would have received more votes? Gerard James, Swansea.

gentina by way of a network of European masterstrokes. The Nazis, perhaps, less than open about the Ustaša's crimes against humanity. Yugo Kovach, Twickenham, Middx.

UP here people welcome the news that the Pope may be about to apologise for Urban II's unhelpful remarks to the Council of Clermont in 1095. But what about the rest of it? OK, he's sorry about Galileo and all the heretic burning and the Holocaust. But I'm still annoyed about the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and earlier in the week I was talking to some people on Hebdon Bridge station who reckon the Abingdon business could do with a bit of explaining. David Green, Oldham, Lancs.



Venues and roles for McKellen

SIR Ian McKellen wanted to get in touch with the people and stick to socialist principles, why did he need to go to Leeds? (Exit North as Sir Ian treads of London's bourgeoisie, September 24). He could have hopped across to strut the boards at the Lyric Theatre Royal Stratford East, the Young Vic, the Tricycle in Kilburn or any one of a number of London's first-rate subsidised theatres which play to young, culturally diverse audiences made up of Londoners from all walks of life.

London has 14 of the 30 poorest boroughs in the country. Its population is younger than the average and 193 languages are spoken here. Arts organisations in the capital are serving their local communities through their programming and in a host of other imaginative ways. Trevor Phillips, Chairman, London Arts Board.

World rank

WHAT a pity that retired BBC executives like John Tusa charge into critical print whenever new appointments are made (Birt's big con, September 27). He questions Mark Byford's suitability as chief executive of the World Service and misquotes him. As a journalist who has always championed journalism of insight and depth, John might have spoken to Mark Byford before hitting the keyboard and develop for himself

a real understanding of Mark's talents and skills and the strengths he will bring to Bush House.

As an executive about to join the ranks of the BBC retired, I have content that John Tusa's appointment made an inspired appointment and that Mark, who is one of the outstanding talents of his generation, will prove to be a much respected and highly successful leader of the World Service. Ronald Neil, Chief executive, BBC Production, London.

What hope for charity as the UK and Iran trade fatwas

CYNICISM is my reaction to the reappearance of the ubiquitous features of Salman Rushdie on your front page (Rushdie's nightmare is over, September 25). Rushdie walks free because Iran needs to get cash to make the bomb (now Pakistan has it) and the British government needs new markets and oil.

In the scramble to restore diplomatic and trade relations, the "new" administration in Tehran and our own new-born merry trade fatwas. In exchange for the freeing of Rushdie, Tehran, by a carefully orchestrated smear campaign, has got Whitehall effectively to close down Iran Aid, the UK charity which looks after thousands of orphan children in Iran. The existence of this charity is naturally highly embarrassing to Tehran, since these are no ordinary children: they are the children of "moorabes" — dissidents — whose parents have been executed, often in front of the children. They themselves are branded as infidels by association, therefore, as with the Jews in Nazi Germany, it is "hala" (OK) to mistreat them and against the law to help them.

Through a carefully co-ordinated network of volunteers inside Iran, for the past 15 years Iran Aid has been gathering these often deeply traumatised children off the streets and looking after them in tiny "safe" households dotted all over the big cities of Iran. But now these same thousands of children will starve, because all of a sudden, as of July, the British government, via its Charity Commission, has placed Iran Aid under "investigation" — a euphemism which effectively means the charity can no longer operate, and so the children — and the remaining evidence of Iran's appalling human rights record — will die. Belinda McKenzie, Friend of Iran Aid, London.

Pie-eyed

WAS interested to read of the first annual "do" in J B Priestley's honour (Pie Night, September 14) and the praise of Philip Smith's pies. But Priestley in his famous September 29, 1940 broadcast was not describing Philip Smith's I've got a shop window, which displayed the wares of a traditional pork butcher, but the unique window display of Robert's meat and potato pie shop in Upper Godwin Street. Robert's window held only a large gleaming steel cylinder surmounted by a golden crust from which rose a gentle plume of steam. Generations of Bradford's children flattened their noses against Robert's window in vain attempts to discover the secret of the mysterious steaming pie. Derek Pickles, Bradford.

Endpiece: Packs and pacts

Roy Hattersley

I SPENT much of last week sorting through the bewildering bundle of documents with which I was supposed to prepare myself for what I think is the 88th annual conference of the Labour Party. When I was involved in the organisation of these occasions, they were always identified by their historic number. The habit has been abandoned, either to contribute to the clear break with the wickedly socialist past or as a transitional arrangement before the Third Way Calendar is introduced and we acknowledge that the world began in The Year of Our Blair 1994.

Most of the documents within which I should call the "pack" are designed in the style of double-glazing advertising brochures. Philip Gould, of focus group fame, actually uses what calls itself "Conference Guide 1998" to write an advertising feature for a book that is due to be published — the name of which unfortunately escapes

me. New Labour, new commercialism. But that was not, in itself, an innovation. The aesthetic quality of conference documents has gone steadily down hill since Peter Mandelson — then the director of Labour Party communications — took over the agenda in a dainty peach-coloured box which, according to Neil Kinnock, would have been a more appropriate packaging for his teenage daughter's toilet soap.

This year the language in the brochures has descended to match the quality of their design. Much of the information is provided in the style of those motel menus which describe "a gourmet embraced symphony of succulent pork, aromatic herbs and sun-blessed grain" — when they mean a sausage. Consider what the guide offers delegates at 2.15 on Thursday afternoon. "WE MUST STOP MEETING LIKE THIS — Leadership volunteer motivation and life beyond meetings". That, I take it, will be a discussion of local organisation. Uncertain whether or not Olympia Hall was a venue or

the *nom de guerre* of the new general secretary and worried about why the guide predicts that Tony Blair's speech would encourage "swirling from the chandeliers", I telephoned mission control at Millbank Tower for guidance about the dates of big debates. When I asked, was conference to debate proportional representation — or "voting reform" as its proponents call it in a not very subtle attempt to pre-empt the argument. The obliging apparition at the other end of the line said that she presumed it would be "Monday or Thursday when we discuss Democracy and Citizenship. But we don't give sessions exact titles these days." Who said that press offices always embellish the simple truth?

I assume that if and when the debate takes place, the more intellectual delegates — to whom the conference guide is intended to appeal — will concentrate on a basic philosophical question. "Is democracy best achieved by the election of a House of Commons in which the political affiliation of

the individual members is a reflection of the votes cast for each party at the general election?" The sensible (though complicated) answer is "no". The fashionable (and superficial) reply is "yes". But there is another consequence of proportional representation which might interest one or two of the assembled party members. After "electoral reform" there will never be a Labour government again. Let us take the last and next election results as an example of why that is certainly the case.

The landslide triumph of 1997 was won by Labour on 43.2 per cent of total votes cast. In 1995, Harold Wilson won fewer seats, but attracted a larger proportion of the popular vote. Indeed, throughout the Fifties and Sixties, Labour's share of the vote was always greater than it was last year. But, in only one of those elections did the Liberals' percentage reach double figures. Labour did spectacularly well when the Liberals did spectacularly badly. Proportional representation is intended to boost the Liberal

Democrats' prospects in two ways. They will win more seats and, in consequence, attract the votes of instinctive supporters who previously believed that voting Liberal was a waste of time. Margaret Thatcher is certainly right to predict that Tony Blair will win a second term. However, were the next election to be fought on anything that resembles proportional representation, Labour would be lucky to win 40 per cent of the vote.

Whatever the electoral reform devotes may believe, there will never be a House of Commons which exactly reflects the voting pattern of the whole electorate. And before the fanatics begin to compose their dissenting letters, they may like to reflect that my argument would be stronger were that ever to be the case. In fact, Labour — because its votes are bunched in small urban constituencies — is likely to have more seats than the simple distribution of votes would justify. Let us therefore, for the sake of argument, suggest that Tony Blair would

command 45 per cent of the House of Commons and round the figure up to 300 Labour MPs.

Does anybody really think that he would struggle on in such a minority? The result would be a coalition and the new government's policy would have to be adjusted to attract the support of whatever number of Liberals were needed to guarantee domination of the House of Commons. The arrangement would be distinctly different from the Lib-Lab pact of the 1970s. The Liberal Democrats — boosted by the spirit of the new constitution — would demand a formal relationship. There would be Liberal Democrats in the Cabinet and Liberal Democrat policies in the Queen's Speech. To be fair, that may be exactly what some of the advocates of proportional representation want. It is certainly what they would get. If we debate the subject in Blackpool this week, I hope that they will say so.

David McKee's column will appear tomorrow



Betty Carter

Jazz on the razor's edge

BETTY CARTER, who has died of cancer aged 69, had a reputation as an instrument-like singer who didn't want either the audience or her partners to be able to figure exactly what was coming next. The kind, in other words, that the jazz cognoscenti loves, and the casual listener sometimes feels stretches the envelope of a song to the puzzling point where it stops being identifiable as an envelope at all.

But Carter could always pull even non-buff listeners back into the clearing, however merciless she might have appeared to be leading them into a thicker and abandoning them there — and that was a secret of the success of one of the most enthralling jazz singers of all time.

Although Carter never had the mass popular appeal of Ella Fitzgerald — and her devotion to maintaining spontaneity and a fast-moving conversational intimacy with an ever-changing retinue of sharp young musicians inevitably narrowed her audience — she was never simply a musician's musician.

At the Blue Note Club in New York in July 1997, where Carter was cracking through 30-minute sets without a glimmer of an indication of either failing imagination or failing strength, she repeatedly demonstrated how the rugged vigour of her personality, her acerbic wit and an unerring sense of drama and timing could reach every kind of audience, familiar with her deviously oblique encryption of pop songs and Broadway standards or not.

A young woman in the front row of that Blue Note audience was visibly irritated by some of the singer's more labyrinthine improvisations. Then she was suddenly hypnotised by Carter's abrupt switch from poignant resignation to a yelp of panicked anger on the reliction song *Thirty Years*. She stared up at the singer as if transfixed by an emotional explosion she had not seen coming, and clutched her boyfriend — as if unprepared by the instability of the future. That kind of thing happened on Carter dates all the time.

Betty Carter's voice could negotiate most of the nuances and ambiguities lying between the sounds of a coaxing whisper and a gunshot. She was small, alert, funny, with shrewd and mobile features, and she occupied a stage as if it was her living room — or, more accurately, her bedroom.

tween the sounds of a coaxing whisper and a gunshot, and in 50 years on the road she honed those skills to a razor's edge that could be spine-chilling as well as fascinating. Sometimes she would bait and beguile her musicians as if she were an exasperated mother trying to enervate laggardly children, and her musicians — usually piano trios — would watch her every move, interpreting the weaves and feints of her restlessly demonstrative arm movements on the fly, waiting for the suddenly insistent swivel of the head, or the un-

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expected percussive shout that the drummer was expected to turn into an explosive cymbal-smash almost before the sound had left her lips.

She was small, alert, funny, with shrewd and mobile features, and she occupied a stage as if it was her living room — or, more accurately, her bedroom.

The repertoire was usually the same from one show to the next, but the interpretations varied from night to night, and place to place, and band to band. *East of the Sun*,

West of the Moon was a favourite, but Carter wouldn't let the uninitiated in on the secret of the song's identity for a full five minutes or more of molten, interval-varying improvised lines and one-touch collective improvisation with the others, just occasionally dropping in the odd reference to the song as a clue.

She would deliver love-songs with poignant emotion, vibrating like piano wire or with a sensuality you could dip a finger in. Yet she might still burst into laughter at a missed-cue in the trio, and the moment wouldn't detract at all from the story of the song, because her deconstruction of its mechanics would intensify rather than obstruct the meshing of technique, experience and humanity in her work.

Carter was originally from Michigan, born Lillie Mae Jones. She appeared on stage with Charlie Parker in Detroit in the 1940s — playing boogie from school and altering her birth certificate to avoid the club's no-juveniles rule. It was a period in which she was hypnotised by both bop and its lifestyle.

The legend then goes that she maintained a stormy relationship with the Lionel Hampton band for a couple of years, being fired seven times by the boss and re-hired seven times by Hampton's wife Gladys, who was an unshakable Carter fan.

"Hampton was the band leader and I was a little snit," Carter told the Guardian in 1987. "I loved the Dizzy Gillespie bebop world and I wanted to be in Dizzy's band but he wasn't hiring females. I didn't realise then that the man upstairs had put me in the best band I could have been in. Disciplined, well run, well paid, and a place where I could learn."

Hampton dubbed the incorrigibly-improvising Carter "Betty Bop", which she hated, but the experience turned her into a fine big-band singer, and later an inspired and inspiring collaborator with artists such as Miles Davis and Ray Charles. But small groups always suited her best for their interactive potential, offering scope for winging it that constantly diverted Carter from the heart-on-the-sleeve emotionalism of the torchy jazz

singers, or the metallic, dis-embodied scating of bop vocalists, who pretend to be instruments.

She liked working with players young enough to be her children, because "you get energy, inspiration and eagerness from them," she observed. "They don't watch the clock, they just want to play. You're working with a bunch of kids who haven't been over-exposed to the standards but are hearing them for the first time. They don't know how it goes — so they're flexible enough to do it different. I can teach them what jazz really is."

Carter was a Grammy-winner, and her 1960 duet with Ray Charles on *Baby It's Cold Outside* became a jazz classic. Now-celebrated musicians who worked and learned at her tough school include pianists John Hicks and Mulgrew Miller, bassists Buster Williams and Dave Holland, and drummers Jack DeJohnette and Lewis Nash.

Carter was keenly aware of the politics of the music industry, and resisted the major labels' attempts to take the sting and unpredictability out of jazz. She founded her own record label, Bet-Car, in the late 1960s, and one of the sessions she released through it, *The Audience with Betty Carter*, was nominated for a Grammy. In 1988, Verve offered her a contract, re-issuing her four earlier Bet-Car sets, and the Grammy-winning *Look What I Got*.

Betty Carter won a best female jazz vocalist Grammy award in 1988, and in 1993 founded Jazz Ahead, a music programme that brings a score or so of promising young jazz musicians from all over the States to New York every spring, for study and performance — a fitting testimony to her tireless efforts to bring on the next jazz generation.

Eric Harland, one of her last percussionists, said, "She was like a mother to us all. She really made sure that not only in music but in life that we were going to be OK."

Betty Carter is survived by her two sons, Myles and Kagle Redding.

John Fordham

Betty Carter (Lillie Mae Jones) jazz singer, born May 16, 1929; died September 26, 1998



Jazz on a summer's eve... Betty Carter at the Catalina Bar, Los Angeles, in May 1996 with bassist Yashon Johnson

Komla Gbedemah

Friends and foes in Ghana

FROM the late 1940s until the beginning of the 1960s Komla Gbedemah, who has died aged 68, was a key ally of Kwame Nkrumah, the man who led what had been the British colony of the Gold Coast into independence as Ghana in 1957. From 1951 and the birth of the country's self government until 1961 when Nkrumah seemed securely in power, Gbedemah was a cabinet minister. But in that year

leader was released, and called by the governor Sir Charles Noble Arden-Clarke, to form the first African government in a British colony. The ultimate result was the transformation of the Gold Coast into Ghana, and independence on March 6, 1957.

That was the high water mark. Four years later Gbedemah went into a European exile which only ended with the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966.

the alliance shattered, and Gbedemah went into an exile that marked the end of his effective political career.

A brilliant political organiser, he masterminded the successful 1961 campaign of the Convention People's Party (C.P.P.) in the Gold Coast's first general elections. Nkrumah, after declaring a civil disobedience campaign, had been jailed by the British authorities but Gbedemah's work led to Nkrumah's triumph. The

Gbedemah was born at Warri in Nigeria. His father was a government medical official. He was educated at Cape Coast mission school and later at Achimota College, seen as an "African Elton". Founded by Sir Gordon Guggisberg on English public-school lines with the aim of producing an African elite. He was a contemporary there of Nkrumah. Lack of money prevented Gbedemah from studying medicine so he became a teacher, confectioner and businessman.

In 1949, by which time he had become manager and editor of the *Accra Evening News*, he joined Nkrumah in the C.P.P. when it broke away from the main nationalist movement, the United Gold Coast Convention.

Elected to the Gold Coast legislative assembly in 1948, Gbedemah became health and later commerce minister. In 1964 he became finance minister in the colony's first all-African cabinet.

As early as 1951 there were fears of a split in the C.P.P. The Gold Coast's governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, considered that Nkrumah had vanity in full measure, but described Gbedemah in a letter as "one of the vainest and most determined Gold Coast Africans I have met... He regards himself as God's gift to finance... we shall probably have some novel financial

doctrines from him."

By 1955 Gbedemah was in London to discuss the Volta River Project and the trust territory of Togoland. In 1957 he was a member of a delegation to London on constitutional issues. After independence he remained at the finance ministry until 1961, after which he was briefly minister for presidential affairs. Then came Nkrumah's "Dawn Broadcast" — a denunciation of the Ghanaian "capitalist roaders". It marked the low point in the two men's 14-year political journey.

Following Nkrumah's overthrow Gbedemah returned to Ghana. In exile he had formed links with Kofi Busia, a leading opponent of Nkrumah, but in the new climate many Ghanaians saw him as the man who had done most to assure Nkrumah's dominance.

In the 1969 general elections Gbedemah's party, the National Alliance of Liberals, was defeated by Dr Busia's Progress Party. Gbedemah was prevented from taking his seat in the national assembly and forbidden to lead a political party. He was married twice. He leaves several children and his second wife.

Reginald Ansong-Gbete

Komla Agbeli Gbedemah, politician, born June 17, 1912; died July 11, 1998

Holger Jannasch

The origin of species

HOLGER JANNASCH, who has died aged 71, was one of a small band of scientists whose discoveries were so startling that most of the world has yet to realise their significance. In 1977 he — and other oceanographers — discovered an entirely new realm of life in one of the most unexpected environments of all: the deep ocean floor.

For more than a century, marine biologists imagined the ocean floor as an arid, too dark, too cold and too infertile to support anything except a kind of sparse, scavenging life. The orthodox argued that since life depended on oxygen, sunlight and a steady supply of nutrients, the richest zones would be the coastal waters, the mangrove swamps, the river estuaries, and that life in the sea would become more precarious the further from land.

Because there would be plankton in the upper few metres, there would be food for a limited range of creatures, but the deep would be home to little more than sperm whale and squid, and a few strange fish that created their own luminosity. At the bottom of the abyss, where no light penetrated, and where the temperature was little more than freezing, there would only be sterility.

Then Jannasch and his colleagues at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, working with a little submersible called Alvin, entered the history books. While exploring a mid-ocean ridge in the Pacific, they found the famous black smokers — volcanic springs pumping huge quantities of dissolved minerals at ferocious temperatures into the ocean waters.

Around these vents there lived huge concentrations of

sulphur-eating microbes, which flourished in temperatures above boiling point, and which fed completely unexpected ecosystems. He had found a realm of life which thrived on hot water rather than sunlight and grazed on minerals rather than grass, and even stranger predators which fed on the bacteria.

These bacteria are now known as hyperthermophiles. The bet among biologists now is that they could have among their number the oldest inhabitants of the planet, and that in their dark, hot homes could lie the answer to the commencement of life itself 3.8 billion years ago.

Jannasch — who last year identified *Pyrolobus fumarii*, the bug that holds the record for growth at 113 degrees centigrade — himself wondered if the discovery did not also open the possibility of similar communities on other planets. As a consequence of such discoveries, NASA scientists are preparing to probe the sub-surface of Mars, and dig beneath the ice of Jupiter's moon, Europa, in the hope of discovering signs of extra-terrestrial life.

BACK home, some biologists now think that the recently-discovered subterranean microbial life, extending kilometres below the surface rocks, could have a total mass far exceeding that of all life on the surface of Earth. Jannasch was never so sure. His name, however, lives on in *Methanococcus jannaschii*, one of the first ancient microbes to have its complete DNA code unravelled, a first step in understanding its evolutionary past. But there were other microbes to be examined. "Every time we go to sea, we isolate new ones," he said.

"We get surprises all the time. The biology and biophysics of these organisms is completely different, which is very exciting."

Jannasch was born in Holzminde, Germany, drafted into the forces at the age of 18, and captured by the British towards the end of the second world war. Once freed, he became a forest ranger and then worked at a bird sanctuary on the German coast before switching to oceanography. In 1963, he moved to the United States.

JANNASCH was a scientist on more than 35 ocean expeditions, gathering samples in the Mediterranean and Black Seas as well as the Atlantic and Pacific. He explored lakes in Tibet, in Africa and in Tasmania, and his understanding of the metabolisms of microbes at huge pressures and icy temperatures helped explain the preservation of shipwrecks such as the Titanic.

"Science is an adventure, not a career," he once said. In 1965 he was elected a foreign associate of the US National Academy of Sciences.

He is survived by his wife and two sons.

Tim Radford

Holger Windekilde Jannasch, scientist, born May 23, 1927; died September 8, 1998

Death Notices

GLUCKSMAN, Miriam Deborah, born 8th June 1904, died 22nd September 1998, aged 94. She was the wife of Peter, mother of David and Sophie, sister of Raphael and Naomi and who will be so much missed by them and her brothers and sisters in law. Her husband and her many friends and colleagues. Donations, if desired, to Dr. Cunningham's Research Fund, Royal Marsden Hospital, Chelsea.

MASTERS, Brian John, The Right Reverend, Bishop of Exeter, born 22nd September 1904, died 22nd September 1998, aged 94. Burial at Exeter Cathedral on Friday, Oct. 2nd at 11am followed by private burial at Exeter Cathedral. Donations to L.O.F. Bishop Masters Memorial Fund. Enquiries to Leverton & Sons Ltd 0171 367 6075.

SKELTON, Vernon J, born 21.01.1941 who died tragically on 26.09.1998, in his 58th year. Beloved husband of Marion. Cremated on 29.09.1998. Family flowers only please.

In Memoriam

ELSON, Vernon J, born 21.01.1941 who died tragically on 26.09.1998, in his 58th year. Beloved husband of Marion. Cremated on 29.09.1998. Family flowers only please.

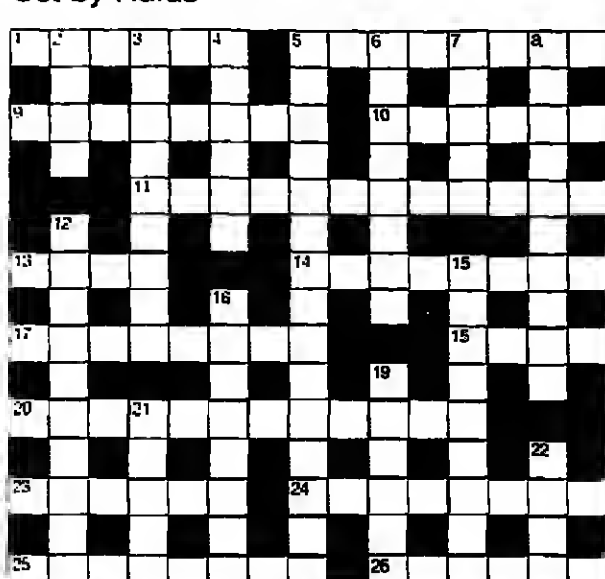
STATHAM, Cathy, died in hospital on 26.09.1998, aged 52. The fire and the rose are one.

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Guardian Crossword No 21,391

Set by Rufus



Across

- 1 Tongue of a shoe (6)
- 5 Presentation of laws to be amended (8)
- 9 Involved in a score or film story (8)
- 10 To tear round or just go round (6)
- 11 Announcement telling how to disengage one's parachute (5,7)
- 13 A bygone city with a distinctive air (4)
- 14 Be reluctant to suspend a footballer (4,4)
- 17 Two birds seen in early part of the day (4-4)
- 18 A meeting of hands express approval (4)
- 20 Change bowler in successful enterprise (5-7)
- 23 Slowly executed movement gets a soldier in trouble (6)

Down

- 2 Sweet kind of music (4)
- 3 Group on board may have come across it (9)
- 4 With the organ study over, got paid employment (6)
- 6 Inform on how one starts the play (5,3,7)
- 6 Clever operators nurses go for (8)
- 7 True love can prove so extravagant (5)



Winners of Prize Puzzle 21,394

This week's winners of a Collins English Millennium Dictionary are S. P. Davis of London, W. M. P. White of Newdown, Isle of Wight, Greg & Mary Wells of Stratford-upon-Avon, Lesley Fotherby of Leyburn, N. Yorkshire, and Leonard Cope of Birmingham. Please allow 28 days for delivery

Solution tomorrow

Corrections

IN A CAPTION, page 21, August 24, we identified the Australian Labour leader, Kim Beazley (correct in the text) as Ken. We always say Labour, as opposed to Labor (English English, rather than Australian English).

IN A COLUMN, page 24, September 24, having referred to someone who "sits in the House of Lords", we went on, "So too, if she dares to show her face, does Dame Shirley Porter." Daring has nothing to do with it. Dame Shirley Porter is not entitled to sit in the Lords.

IN A report headed, Jail threat to scout leader in sex case, which appeared on page 3 in early editions on September

18, we placed Bourne-mouth in Sussex. It used to be in Hampshire. Now it's in Dorset.

IN OUR report of the Chelsea-Helsinki game, page 2, Sport, we suggested that the Chelsea player, Tore Andre Flo, was Swedish. He is Norwegian.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Surface mail to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3EE. Fax: 0171 239 9587. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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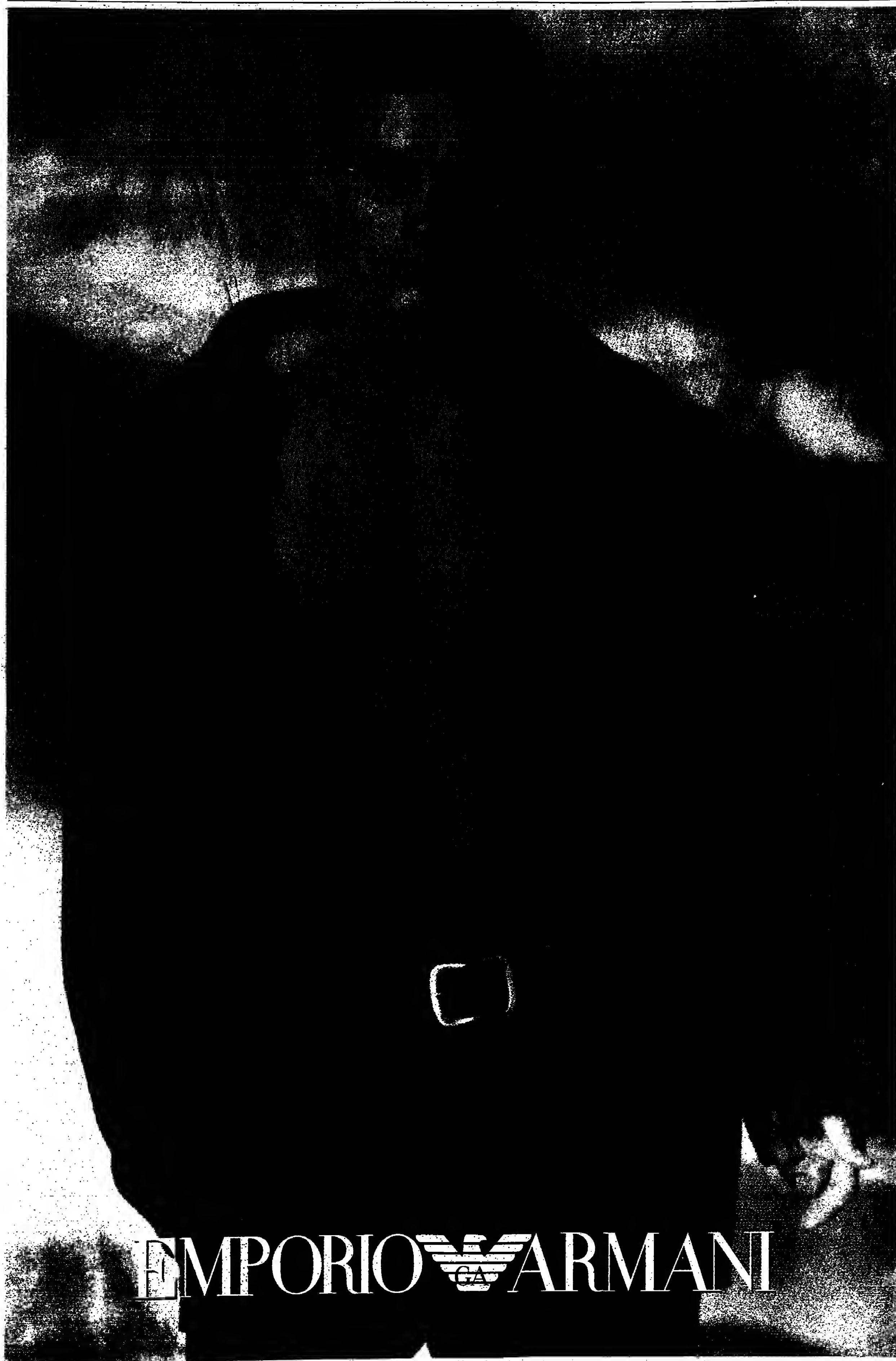


species

J

Death Ritual

in Moscow



EMPORIO  ARMANI



In the acclaimed 12-page sports section



Cash credit
Asmusen
chases
another Arc
19



Cup fever
Henman
seals Britain's
victory
24

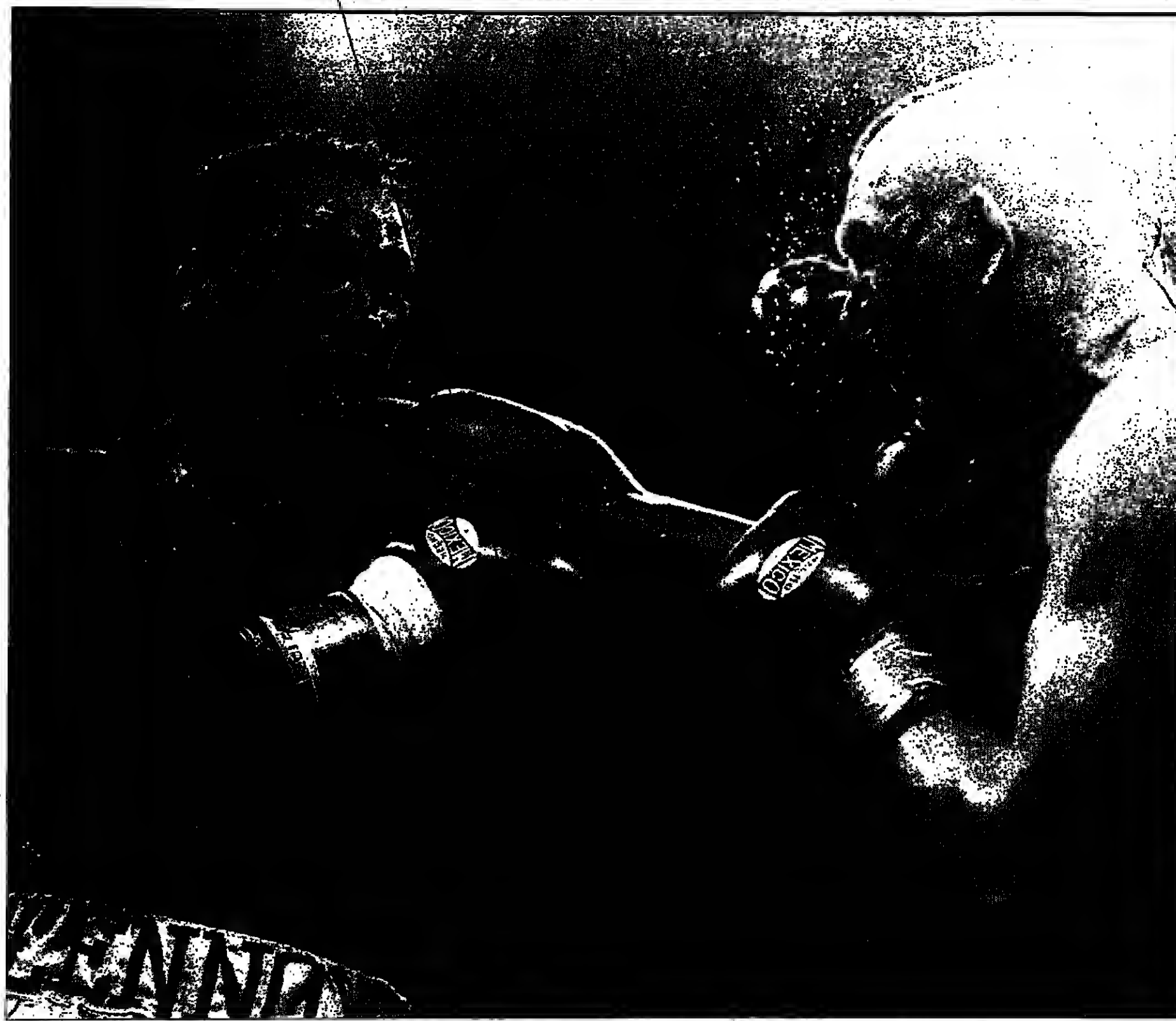


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The Guardian Sport

Monday September 23 1996 www.football.guardian.co.uk

Another 'no-win' victory for the champion



Counterpunch... Lennox Lewis deters an attack by the challenger for his WBC heavyweight title Zeljko Mavrovic with a left jab during his points victory

PHOTOGRAPH BY AL BELLO

Lewis stretched to the limit

John Rawling in Uncasville sees the Briton given the toughest of tests by his Croat challenger

IN SOME circles Zeljko Mavrovic had been derided as a no-hoper and the fight dismissed as a mis-match. The proud Croat proved his critics utterly wrong, and how. He may not be returning to his homeland as the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion but he should be comforted by the knowledge that he gave Lennox Lewis one of the most difficult nights of a long career.

Ultimately Lewis was a clear winner on the judges' cards, by margins of five rounds, six rounds and a ridiculously one-eyed 10 rounds. But victory came at a cost, as the supremely fit challenger exposed Lewis's suspect stamina and once more left the champion vulnerable to his critics.

Mavrovic had been expected to run but Lewis had to hastily rethink tactics as the Croat, roared on by his flag-waving compatriots, marched forward in defiance of Lewis's physical advan-

tages as he attempted to out-gun the champion.

Showing scant regard for Lewis's renowned punching power, Mavrovic earned early success with clubbing head shots and, when Lewis began to find his range with powerful uppercuts, he showed he had one of the strongest of chins.

A dramatic seventh round had many in the 4,254 crowd on their feet as Mavrovic launched a huge attack, pinning Lewis on the ropes, before the champion rallied after nailing the 29-year-old with a sweet right-hand counter. He had tasted the best Mavrovic could offer and returned it with interest. Perhaps the fight was settled there.

Apart from an uncomfortable 11th round, Lewis was able to work effectively behind his jab in the closing stages, but his patchy performance would-be challengers for his title, notably the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation champion Evander Holyfield,

Lewis admitted afterwards: "It was a no-win situation for me. I didn't know too much about him, and the fight was different to what we had expected. I thought he would do a lot of moving."

Lewis's American promoter Dino Duva said he would be

Mavrovic exposed Lewis's suspect stamina and again left him vulnerable to his critics

contacting Holyfield and his promoter Don King today to renew attempts to set up a unification bout. "It will take Evander and his attorneys to have the balls to tell their promoter to take the fight. Lennox wants it, and I believe Evander does. The fans want it, and boxing needs it. But Don seems to want three heavyweight champions. He has to be made to stop screwing around," said Duva.

And then there is Mike Tyson. Discredited, certainly, and psychiatric tests will pronounce shortly on whether he is a psychotic screwball with no place in a boxing ring or a fit and proper person to resume his career. But he is still the biggest draw of all, and the Nevada State Athletic Commission will announce on Saturday if he is to be relicensed.

The widely held perception

of his B virus which forced the postponement of their first meeting, planned for June.

In that eventuality, Lewis would be expected to defend his title again in January. His manager Frank Maloney dismissed suggestions from Frank Warren that it could be against the World Boxing Organisation champion Herbie Hide.

"Frank Warren should get real. Hide is not even in the frame. He won't get a title shot fighting people like Willie Fischer (whom he stopped in two rounds on Saturday in Norwich). If he's serious, Herbie should go and fight Mavrovic and we'll see if he deserves a chance," said Maloney.

The former champion Michael Moorer and the popular New Yorker Lou Savarese, who scored a one-round knockout win over Tyson's conqueror Buster Douglas in his last fight, have emerged as the most likely challengers to the Lewis crown.

And when Lewis goes back into training, it could be with a new man honing his skills. Whispers in Connecticut suggested all was not well between Lewis and Emanuel

Steward, who could be on the way out now.

Steward, who has been Lewis's trainer since the only defeat of the champion's professional career against Oliver McCall four years ago, chose to criticise his fighter on Saturday when the promotional spin doctors were trying to drum up praise.

"Lennox seemed to be getting a little fatigued early on," he said. "Then, I would have preferred Lennox to be a little more aggressive." And, tellingly, after openly criticising those in the Lewis camp earlier in the week who had suggested it would be an easy fight, he said: "Mavrovic is a tough guy. I knew he was a tough guy. You only need to look at his eyes to know he'd die rather than lose a fight. I'm glad he's behind us."

Whether or not Steward is also "behind" Lewis remains to be seen, but the champion would be well advised to recall that the last time he had a cheerleader rather than a critic in his corner, he lost. And against Holyfield — if the fight ever happens — he has been shown by Mavrovic beyond any doubt that he will need all the help he can get.

'Deeply upset' Di Canio to apologise for ref attack

Russell Thomas on the fall-out from Hillsborough's red-card day

PAOLO DI CANIO is expected to issue a public apology to protect his playing career, while Paul Alcock, the referee he assaulted, considers whether to give up officiating.

The Football Association has confirmed it will impose a gross misconduct charge on Di Canio, who has already been suspended indefinitely by his club Sheffield Wednesday, once it receives Alcock's report on the game in which the Italian sent the referee spinning to the ground after being sent off against Arsenal at Hillsborough.

The Wednesday forward can expect severe punishment when he appears before a FA disciplinary commission which has wide-ranging powers.

The Italian's extraordinary act could be punished with a ban approaching the eight months, a British record suspension, handed to Eric Cantona after his infamous kicking assault on a fan in 1995. That would put the 30-year-old Di Canio out for the season, jeopardising his future with Wednesday and, indeed, in the Premiership.

However distasteful Di Canio's action is, considering the commission will take into account any public expression of regret.

Yesterday, while Di Canio remained silent, his co-agent Matteo Roggi said the player was "deeply upset" and "will decide to issue an apology shortly".

The FA's chief executive Graham Kelly refused to

speculate on the outcome of the hearing. "It could be unfair for any commission that deals with a case and for the player himself because whatever he has done he deserves a fair hearing and we are always at pains to ensure that is done."

Meanwhile Alcock, described as "very shocked" by the Premier League referees' officer Philip Don, is considering his future in the game as he digests the incidents at Hillsborough, where he also sent off Arsenal's Martin Keown for his part in the scuffle with Di Canio that saw the Italian dismissed.

After the final whistle Arsenal's Patrick Vieira was claimed to have made a V-sign at home fans and allegedly been involved in an altercation with a policeman in the tunnel. Some eye witnesses claimed the officer put a hand on Vieira's shoulder and the player turned and lashed out in an instinctive reaction.

A South Yorkshire police spokesman said a report would be sent to the FA. A police prosecution has not been ruled out but is unlikely.

Don said: "I have spoken to Paul three times to give him support... it is something you don't expect to happen. He's obviously going to think about his future — whether he continues as a referee has entered his mind."


But, Don added: "I am sure I will see him refereeing in the Premier League in a couple of weeks."

Keown, the third Arsenal player sent off this season, is likely to appeal against his dismissal, believing he was trying to act as a peacemaker.

Match report and David Lacey, page 15




The hair-trigger... Paolo Di Canio is shown the red card by Paul Alcock just before his push on the referee



Religious Education

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A sideways glance at soccer

Football

Premiership: Sheffield Wednesday 1 Arsenal 0

Di Canio puts rage in outrageous

Trevor Haylett on the violent incidents that disgraced the game at Hillsborough

AMID all the rumours and half-truths emanating from Hillsborough on Saturday afternoon there was no suggestion that the home side's dressing-room door had become detached from its hinges nor any hint that what was once a glass mirror was now a thousand pieces on the floor. Paolo Di Canio finally had his dangerously combustible temper under control.

The same could not be said for Patrick Vieira, another player with so much to offer the game but who too is never more than a couple of steps

Match stats

	Sheff Wed	Arsenal
Possession	51%	49%
Attempts on target	4	7
Attempts off target	5	3
Goals	1	0
Fouls	14	11
Offsides	6	6
Bookings	1	3
Sendings-off	1	1



Flashpoint... Wednesday's Paolo Di Canio lashes with Patrick Vieira of Arsenal in a prelude to his sending-off

PHOTOGRAPH: STUART MACFARLANE

away from the next explosive outburst. At the end of this mad, sad affair the Arsenal midfielder appeared to direct abusive hand-signs at the Wednesday supporters and was alleged to have hit a police officer in the tunnel.

Clearly Di Canio has guaranteed himself a long ban with his disgraceful two-handed assault on the referee Paul Alcock, having just been shown the red card for his violent clash with Martin Keown. As part of its investigation the Football Association will study the evidence against Vieira and he too may be the subject of serious sanction.

English football, so willing to embrace Continental flair and charisma, is paying a price for that open-door policy because many of the newcomers too easily fly off the handle. Where Di Canio and Vieira now rampage, so too did Eric Cantona before them.

Like the former Manchester United hothead, who received an eight-month ban

for his flying kick at a Crystal Palace supporter in 1995, there can be no excuse for Di Canio's outrage no matter the provocation that he alluded to as he made his angry way off the field, cursing and gesturing and brushing aside his own manager's attempt to placate him.

Wednesday immediately suspended their star attacker for an indefinite period until the FA has decided what punishment to impose. It is a matter of doubt whether we will see the temperamental Italian in the Premiership again.

"He totally lost it for a split second and I don't know what

was going through his head," said Danny Wilson. "We immediately suspended him so that people understand that we recognise the severity of the incident, and we will back the FA in whatever they choose to do."

After a recent public falling-out with Di Canio, Wilson had made efforts to halt the breach and only 24 hours before this game declared his peace had broken out. Headlines he felt betrayed by what went on but was more concerned at the damage his player had done to the game and the handicap he left his team-mates, who nevertheless

went on to inflict Arsenal's first defeat of the season through a last-minute goal.

The 44th-minute uproar came after Vieira, homed by Wim Jonk outside the Arsenal penalty area, reacted tetchily to the Dutchman tugging on his shirt and bowled him over. Players descended on the scene from all corners and Di Canio and Keown began gawping like school children in the playground. The Italian was the first to be shown the red card and readied by pushing the Kent official to the ground.

It could be argued that Keown was unlucky to go too,

that he was merely acting as peacemaker. Yet fending off his opposite number with a raised forearm while holding on to the neck of his shirt can no further the cause of peace and Alcock was right to show him the red card as well.

It was a great shame that the unseemly episode completely overshadowed a contest which in the second half, with more space in which to play, became a wonderfully free-flowing contest with goalscoring chances at both ends.

The goalkeepers were magnificent. Kevin Pressman blocking Ray Parlour's early surge, extending a leg to deny

Dennis Bergkamp and then plunging to his right to divert Nicolas Anelka's low shot, and Alex Manninger making an acrobatic stop from Emerson Thome, who thought he had headed Wednesday in front.

Wednesday's substitute Lee Briscoe then missed from a far simpler opening but was spared any lasting embarrassment when in the 90th minute he delicately flighted a dipper beyond David Seaman's stand-in. It was a goal which deserved to monopolise the post-match discussion but it became incidental to football's latest controversy.

Rising tide of violence must be stopped

David Lacey calls on managers to set an example to players and fans

LAST November the Football Association fined Paolo Di Canio £1,000 for hitching up his shorts to spectators after scoring for Sheffield Wednesday at Wimbledon. Now the Italian footballing equivalent of Vesuvius could soon be packing his bags and leaving the English game.

When a referee has been pushed to the ground in full view of the crowd, of the FA's director of public affairs David Davies and of BBC cameras, the case for the prosecution would appear to be overwhelming. All that remains to be settled, surely, is the length of Di Canio's suspension and the speed with which Wednesday get shot of him.

He may not be banned for eight months, the punishment meted out to Eric Cantona for attacking an abusive Crystal Palace supporter, but with football again in danger of becoming engulfed by a wave of squabbling players, abusive managers and, most serious of all, violent fans it is the FA's duty to act firmly and swiftly.

Instances of players manhandling referees are on the increase. Two years ago Gary Poole of Birmingham City hunched for four minutes and fined £1,000 for assaulting an official at Manchester City. Last season Arsenal's Emmanuel Petit had a suspension increased by one match and was fined £1,000 for pushing Paul Durkin. Two West Ham players, Steve Lomas and Samassi Abou, were each given additional one-game bans for making physical contact with referees.

Match officials are being abused, both on the field and from the bench, with increasing venom. And the line dividing verbal assaults from physical attack has become dangerously indistinct.

Clearly the benches need to calm down. Last Monday the Blackburn Rovers manager Roy Hodgson harangued officials after one of his players was sent off. On Thursday Roy Evans, co-manager at Liverpool and annoyed at a penalty awarded to Manchester United, declared that referees were ruining the game.

There is no sign that flailing managers is acting as a deterrent. But if those in charge of teams cannot behave, then what hope is there that the more volatile players will keep their emotions in check?

The reaction of Danny Wilson, the Wednesday manager, in announcing Di Canio's suspension by the club was commendable. But the FA, when it has dealt with Di Canio, should surely have another look at Arsenal's disciplinary record.

Martin Keown, who was sent off with Di Canio, may have a case for appeal since he appeared to have been trying to prevent trouble. But the spark which ignited Saturday's scenes at Hillsborough was Patrick Vieira's violent over-reaction to having his shirt pulled by Wim Jonk. Shuttling is an insidious form of cheating but it is no excuse for a brawl.

It is only a year since the FA imposed a suspended fine of £50,000 on Arsenal for their poor disciplinary record during 1996-97, when they collected six red cards and 91 yellows. Already this season Arsenal have had three players sent off plus 16 cautions, and now Vieira may be in trouble after an alleged incident with a policeman in the Hillsborough tunnel.

The present mood in the game is hysterical rather than anarchical. But only last Thursday violence involving Manchester United and Liverpool factions recalled the worst days of hooliganism.

Clearly football needs to watch its step, not to mention its tongue, its feet and its fists. Nothing will halt the boom of the Nineties quicker than the Seventies and Eighties revisited.

Newcastle United 2 Nottingham Forest 0

It takes all sorts

Harry Pearson

AS THE travelogue cliché would have it, the Premiership is a land of contrasts. No two men illustrate this notion better than Russ Gullit, manager of Newcastle United, and his counterpart at the City Ground, Dave Bassett.

There is something cheerily old-fashioned about Bassett. He reminds you of one of those uncles who would take you for a kickabout in the garden on Christmas Day when the other adults were slumped in front of the Queen's Speech.

After this entertaining game the Forest boss sported a club blazer and grey-tinted slacks. His face had the pinkish hue of the freshly scrubbed; his neat blond hair was sharply parted and held firmly in place by maily unguents.

Bassett is a man of action. At rest is not his natural state. When stationary he has the perpetual air of someone who is on the verge of breaking into a trot or doing a couple of dozen squat-thrusts. So,

answering the questions at St James' Park with courtesy, candour and no little humour, Bassett never quite dispelled the feeling that he was in a hurry to be somewhere else.

When he left he bustled across the room giving off an odour of talcum powder and shaving cream. As he passed he la-la-la'd a merry tune.

In a film you feel the role of Bassett would be taken by Kenneth Connor. Gullit on the other hand would play himself, if only because no actor will ever be found who is quite glamorous enough for the part. On Saturday he sauntered in confidently wearing a chocolate-brown suit, matching suede shoes, a coffee-latte coloured shirt and a bronze shot-alike tie. Bassett swigged Lucozade straight from the plastic bottle, the Magpies' manager had a glass of sparkling mineral water.

Like all stars the Dutchman has the habit of appearing far larger than he actually is. Given that the Newcastle manager is actually pretty big to begin with, this means that his appearance can make even a

sparingly populated room seem suddenly overcrowded.

After the game somebody put it to him that at times during the match things "had been quite hairy" for the home side. Gullit frowned, thought for a moment, then shook his head. "What is that, hairy?" he inquired.

Presumably it was the idiom which had confused him rather than anything he had witnessed on the pitch. For although it would be a mistake to say that victory flattered a Newcastle team for whom Alan Shearer, whether scoring his two goals, flattening defenders or subjecting the linesman to torrents of invective, seemed like a man rejuvenated, it was true to say that the Magpies' goal-keeper Shay Given did more than enough to merit his Man of the Match award.

"Technically, and tactically, things could be improved," Gullit said, "but on the pitch and in training we are giving very positive vibes."

"Some of our finishing today was crap," said Bassett.

Aston Villa 1 Derby County 0

Gregory vindicated by Barry's sense of timing

David Lacey

AFTER a weekend dominated by football's mad dog tendency it is comforting to find the Premiership still led by a team made up almost entirely of Englishmen who are not behaving as if they have had a touch of the sun. Even Ian Collymore managed to put out the last five minutes of Aston Villa's game against Derby County, first versus second, on Saturday without causing offence.

The present Villa side are English almost to a man, the exception being their Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich. Arsenal were the last club to win the championship with a team containing an equally high proportion of English players. Under John Gregory, a manager as English as fish and chips, Villa lost only two. The season their defence has conceded one goal in seven games.

Villa's present free-point lead does not flatter their abilities. In a league where standards of defending remain pretty chronic it is a rare pleasure to find a team so well balanced and widely-wise at the back.

They are providing a apt reminder that it is perversely who make systems and not the other way round. Cenn Hoddle's insistence on employing three central defenders supported by wing-backs started to crack in the World Cup and appeared even more ill-advised in Sweden, but Villa this seems a thoroughly natural approach.

The Gareth Southgate who operates in the middle of V. la's back three is a much more assured prospect than the Southgate who played in the right of Tony Adams in Stockholm and struggled to cover the widening gaps in England's cover. Here, just past the half-hour, he was facing his own goal when Derby's Rory Delap produced a dangerous dipping centre from the left, but without hesitating Southgate hooked the ball upfield to safety.

Ugo Ehiogu remains an equally important component of Villa's defensive unit and few defenders will handle the spidery skills and pace of Paulo Wanchope as efficiently as he did. In an overrated league whose conceit is fed by television's glorification of cheap goals, such sound defending is becoming increasingly hard to find.

The best moment here was not Paul Merson's early winner, well taken though the goal was, but a piece of defence.

Match stats

	Villa Derby	
Possession	52%	48%
Attempts on target	0	4
Attempts off target	0	5
Goals	1	0
Fouls	9	8
Offsides	3	6
Bookings	1	1
Sendings-off	0	0

fending for Aston Villa seven minutes before half-time.

A lapse in midfield by Alan Thompson allowed Lars Bohinen to set up a Derby counter-attack. As Villa struggled to get back, the Norwegian found Dean Sturridge in a position to use his acceleration to bear down on goal.

In this sort of situation the modern defender can hardly win. Against a fast-moving forward even a legal tackle risks a penalty and a red card if the opponent goes down, but to hold off simply makes it easier for him to score.

Gareth Barry, however, was in no such dilemma. The 17-year-old dispossessed Sturridge as coolly and cleanly as you please, confirming the impression that he is as exciting an English prospect in defence as was Michael Owen in



Gregory... good judgment

Everton 0 Blackburn Rovers 0

Smith's defensive Everton are the bores of the draw

Ian Ross

THE supporters deserved better, far better. The afternoon deserved better too. From azure skies the milky sunshine raised temperature, spirits and expectations. Enter the gladiators, piped in, as tradition demands at Goodison Park, by that timeless refrain from Z Cars.

And then? Well, sadly, the demoralising, sweeping realisation that in football the only things that ever happen overnight are hikes in admission prices and the sale of favoured sons. Revivals do take a little longer.

Here it was in all its garish finery: if not the game from hell then one plucked from an equally downbeat, neighbouring suburb.

Twenty minutes from the glorious release of full-time, the Everton manager Walter Smith batted from his chair in the directors' box and headed for the door and the touchline for a spot of much-needed player-baiting. Some one shouted: "Don't go, Walter, at least stay until the end."

Humour, particular of the sarcastic or self-deprecating variety, is the best kind of companion on days such as this.

Smith was probably contemplating placing yet another brick in Everton's impenetrable defence. Since his arrival on Merseyside the former Rangers manager has become a disciple of those who preach the doctrine of safety.

first, those members of the managerial brotherhood who delight at the very mention of a clean sheet.

It had been announced on Friday that Blackburn Rovers would be without their first-choice strikers, Chris Sutton, Kevin Davies and Kevin Gallacher, through injury and illness. Smith's response was to include four centre-backs and two full-backs: safety first, second and third.

Needless to say Blackburn did not create a solitary opening all afternoon as their shackle forward line perished upon the bulky blue line like flies on a bonfire.

Duncan Ferguson hit a post for Everton but that was as close as this apology for entertainment came to shifting out of first gear.

Four home league games, no goals for Everton so far this season. So why is Mikael Madar confined to the main stand for every game?

Madar may be a posing French show-pony who has come to represent almost everything Smith detests in a modern player but he is his club's best finisher and it was his goals which steered Everton away from relegation four months ago.

The afternoon did yield one moment of drama, 12 minutes from the end when Blackburn's Martin Dahlin was sent off for violently elbowing Marco Materazzi. Those who take delight in such base behaviour jeered loudly. Those with higher ideals and aspirations had already left.

Chelsea 2 Middlesbrough 0

'Mercenaries' pay dividends

Jeremy Alexander

AS LAZY mercenaries and ill-disciplined fan-boys Chelsea were pretty unconvincing. Foreign they predominantly are — 12 out of 14 on Saturday — and, like most top-class players, paid idiotic sums. But Chelsea's two red cards this season belong to Dennis Wise and Graeme Le Saux, and Michael Duberry is their worst yellow offender with three in four games. This is the English example.

Meanwhile the overseas effort was stupendous. Beforehand Gianluca Vialli defended his team against idle criticism. On the pitch they defended themselves and, as usual, against Middlesbrough, easily won 2-0. Where Boro respected one another's spirit, Chelsea rejoiced in one another's talent, expressing their virtuosity with brio and making the best of their team-mates' with selfless energy. If there is disenchantment in the camp it was well disguised.

Vialli also denied he was

operating a rotation system. The facts support him. Excluding the special case of the Cup Winners' Cup match against Helsingborg he has averaged two changes a match and never made more than three. Almost all have been forced by unavailability.

If Glenn Hoddle was looking to Paul Gascoigne to explode another myth — that he is way off the pace — the England coach was disappointed. The impression grows that Bryan Robson is whistling in the dark over Gazza, playing him to justify the signature.

Gascoigne's vision remains. If someone makes a subtle run here — he picks it out without any sign that he has seen it. But the old give-and-go has lost its go. According to Rothmans' scales he is the same 11½ stone of 13 years ago but he rarely got out of a jog, repeatedly lost possession and wildly clattered Gianfranco Zola to earn his season's fourth booking.

Robson did not recognise core inactivity but conceded that Boro's ball retention and support play were poor, leav-

ing Hamilton Ricard to make what he could of short corners. He used an old-fashioned shoulder charge to ruffle Chelsea's defensive cool and gain the odd sight of goal but it was a lone and losing battle.

Vialli, who admitted that Tore Andre Flo "is on fire", persisted with Pierluigi Casiraghi for 45 minutes. Vialli said: "It is always difficult to transform all the chances you create." After 84 hours it would be nice to convert one.

Brian Laudrup, who scintillated at Dean Gordon's expense, provided most of them. Straight after half-time he crossed again and Gary Pallister, realising Casiraghi was no longer there to miss, dived headlong for a spectacular own-goal. Late on Zola found another way of beating the outstanding Mark Schwarzer in goal, lobbing him with instinctive grace.

Following last week's win at Blackburn Vialli "chilled out" by seeing Simply Red, his "favourite band". Responsibility does not exclude relaxation. On Saturday his team were stars in everyone's eyes.

Double defends French doctor over Neville World Cup injection

THE FA has denied that there was anything mysterious about injections administered to at least two Manchester United players, including Gary Neville, on England duty during the World Cup.

After it emerged that Neville was given mineral and vitamin boosts by a French doctor, Yann Rougier, three hours before the second-round match against Argentina, United's manager Alex Ferguson wrote to the FA demanding an explanation.

Steve Donohue, the FA's spokesman, said: "Individual club doctors were informed towards the end of last season that players in-

involved in the World Cup would undergo blood tests to assess vitamin and mineral levels.

"Because the England players come together to work in a concentrated training camp we need to have a system that all the players can use, rather than the one put forward by individual clubs."

"Dr Rougier is a respected doctor who works with some of the top clubs in Europe, including Monaco and Milan."

Rougier defended the injections, saying: "The minerals and vitamins I use protect the muscles and will have excellent long-term effects."

16 SPORTS NEWS

The Guardian Monday September 28 1998

FA Carling Premiership

	Home							Away							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pt		
Aston Villa	7	4	0	0	7	1	1	2	0	1	0	7	17		
Derby	7	2	1	0	3	0	1	2	1	3	3	3	12		
Wimbledon	7	2	1	0	6	3	1	2	1	5	6	2	12		
Newcastle	7	2	1	1	7	4	1	1	1	6	3	6	11		
Man Utd	6	3	1	0	10	3	0	1	1	0	3	4	11		
Leeds	7	2	1	0	4	0	0	4	0	4	4	4	11		
Liverpool	7	1	2	0	5	3	2	0	2	7	6	3	11		
Chelsea	6	2	2	0	5	2	1	0	1	5	5	3	11		
Arsenal	7	2	1	0	5	1	0	3	1	1	2	3	10		
Sheff Wed	7	2	0	2	4	2	1	0	2	4	3	3	9		
West Ham	6	1	1	1	5	5	1	2	0	1	0	1	9		
Middlesbrough	7	0	3	0	3	3	2	0	2	5	5	0	9		
Tottenham	7	1	1	2	5	10	1	1	1	3	4	-6	8		
Charlton	7	1	1	1	7	3	0	3	1	4	7	1	7		
Everton	7	0	3	1	0	1	1	1	1	4	4	-1	7		
Nottm Forest	7	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	3	4	7	-4	7		
Leicester	7	1	2	1	4	3	0	1	2	2	5	-2	6		
Blackburn	7	1	1	1	4	4	0	1	3	1	6	-5	5		
Coventry	7	1	1	1	3	6	0	1	3	1	6	-8	5		
Southampton	6	0	1	2	3	5	0	0	3	0	12	-14	1		

Premiership results

Aston Villa 1-1 Derby	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa
Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa	Derby 1-1 Aston Villa

Non-league

CONFERENCE	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Cheltenham	12	8	3	1	29	12	27						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						
St Albans	12	6	3	3	18	18	24						

Nationwide round-up

First Division

SUNDERLAND moved back to the top on goals scored after a 1-1 draw at Portsmouth courtesy of a late equaliser from Allan Johnston. Peter Reid's team, lacking Kevin Phillips, had trailed to a first-half goal from Sunny, before Scott picked up a loose ball seven minutes from time and drove it past Aaron Flahavan. "We have played against the best team in the league and deserved to get something more out of it," said Pompey's manager Alan Ball. Bradford's Gordon Watson ended more than 18 months of anguish by scoring both goals in a 3-1 win over visiting Barnsley. The striker suffered an horrendous knee injury in a challenge with Huddersfield's Kevin Gray in February 1997 and although action for compensation is still proceeding he came off the bench to cancel out Ashley Ward's goal three minutes from time and hit a winner on the whistle. "Everyone in football must be pleased that Gordon is on a comeback," said Bradford's manager Paul Jewell.

Two goals in the final 11 minutes at Carrow Road sent Birmingham to a third defeat in a row. Craig Bellamy and twin Roberts scored for Norwich but Trevor Francis, the St Andrew's manager, said: "We are very disappointed but it is very hard to find any consistency in this division." Watford went third with a 1-0 home win thanks to Peter Kennedy's fifth-minute penalty, conceded by the Ipswich goalkeeper Richard Wright after he failed to control a back pass. Blackpool's manager Gary Megson sent the home team out for the second half 10 minutes early after they trailed West Bromwich Albion by two Lee Hughes goals. "I thought any humiliation had already been done with the scoreline," Megson said. It worked, too, as goals from Martin McIntosh and Chris Burke earned a point. Problems mounted for Ray Harford at Queens Park Rangers, who slipped into the bottom two after a disastrous 4-1 loss at Oxford. "It was a pathetic performance," the manager admitted.

Beadstrong... Sunderland's Daniele DiGiacio gets the better of a challenge with John Aloisi of Pompey

Nationwide League

FIRST DIVISION	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						
Sheff Wed	10	6	1	3	13	8	18						

Scotland

PREMIER LEAGUE	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Rangers	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						

Europe

ITALY	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						
Flamini	10	7	1	2	21	14	22						

Second Division

STOKE City's lead was set to three points after a surprisingly emphatic 3-1 home defeat by Blackpool at Britannia Stadium. Sean Little's loan went into the match full of confidence after recording eight wins from their first nine games but their optimism was blown away when Clive Carlisle opened the scoring after just six minutes. Two goals from Martin Arfidge turned the screw of Stoke. Dean Crowe's 45th-minute penalty proved scant consolation for little's team and most of the 15,000 crowd. Blackpool moved into third place, a point behind Bolton, leapfrogging Barnsley with a goal scored even though the south-coast team also enjoyed victory, winning 2-0 at home to struggling Oldham through goals from Stephen Robinson and Mark Stein. Walsall moved into fifth with a credible 1-0 win over Luton at Kenilworth Road, while Fulham are a

Third Division

IRON resolve brought about a change of leaders with Scunthorpe displacing Darlington after their first away win against Brighton since the Sixties. Darroo Stamp's headed double sent the Lincolnshire Scunthorpe in front and added their third in the 59th minute. Darlington's sojourn at the summit was cut short by Brentford who, with their 275,000 signing from Crystal Palace, Hermann Helderarsen, strengthening the defence, scored three without reply. The Bees swarmed all over their opponents and Darren Powell opened their account, stabbing home from close range following a corner by Warren Aspinall, who was making his 500th league appearance. Aspinall then set up Martin Rowlands who added the second with a powerful drive from 30 yards after 20 minutes. Lloyd Owusu completed the scoring after the break. Barnet, who have recovered well from their recent 9-1 hu-

milation at the hands of Peterborough, defeated third-placed Rotherham 4-2 at Derby. Scott McGleish, Ken Charley and John Doolan put Barnet in the driving seat by half-time and after Rotherham had staged a second-half recovery, Sean Devine made sure of the points with four minutes left. Cambridge United, fresh from their Worthington Cup victory over Sheffield Wednesday, were held to a 1-1 draw by Exeter at Abbey Stadium, John Richardson equalising for the Devon side with a last-minute effort. Shrewsbury Town received an unexpected boost to morale at Gay Meadow. The bottom team looked set for another defeat when their former striker Ian Stevens scored three minutes from the end, but Steve Kerrigan hit a last-gasp equaliser to earn the home side only their fifth point of the season. They are now only two points behind Hull, who were beaten by Wycombe half double at Mansfield.



Beadstrong... Sunderland's Daniele DiGiacio gets the better of a challenge with John Aloisi of Pompey

STOKE CITY'S LEAD WAS SET TO THREE POINTS AFTER A SURPRISINGLY EMPHATIC 3-1 HOME DEFEAT BY BLACKPOOL AT BRITANNIA STADIUM.

Football

Premiership: Crystal Palace 1 Sheffield United 0

Fan helps Curcic pick lock on a day of all the nations

Trevor Haylett

AS IF to point up the polyglot nature of English football, a Chinese man yesterday laid on a cross for a native of Yugoslavia to deliver the goal that decided a game in south London.

In the congratulatory huddle that formed round Sasa Curcic after his emphatic strike with 15 minutes left were an Australian and an Italian while an Israeli and an Argentinean applauded from the bench. Terry Venables is making good use of his travels as an international coach.

Curcic's half-time arrival brought a new dimension to Palace's previously sluggish attempts to capitalise on their neat approach play. Although the Serb can be an infuriating performer he maintains the ability to decide a tight struggle such as this.

Undoubtedly Palace were helped by the 39th-minute dismissal of the United midfielder Ian Hamilton, who had begun the afternoon with a storming drive which clipped the top of the crossbar with a

mere 13 seconds on the clock. Booked soon afterwards, Hamilton was asking for trouble when he held back Hayden Mullins, although it was a clumsy foul which, with a different referee from Paul Taylor, might have escaped such censure.

The United manager Steve Bruce said: "I'm not looking for excuses but I don't think that was worthy of a sending-off and it changed the game around."

United have not won away for 10 months and here again they failed in front of goal. Dean Saunders, superbly found by the raiding Vassilis Borbokis, could do no better than direct his header into the side-netting when well placed. In the second half Graham Stuart, having gathered Gareth Taylor's through-pass, hesitated and enabled Fraser Digby to make the save.

Palace will stay in a transitory phase for a bit longer yet and their supporters will have to show patience. The Venables revolution has not been helped by injury and illness, which yesterday cost him the services of his brightest striker, Matt Jansen. But

there was still a glimpse of a promising future.

The deep centre after a powerful left-wing run to pave the way for Curcic's goal was not the only good thing achieved by the Chinese newcomer Fan Zhiyi. The audience watching live on television back home in Asia would also have been thrilled to a resounding header, which came close to scoring.

Seeing Bruce stagger into the post-match press-room afterwards, fatigued and with scars crossing his face, was no advertisement for the role of player-manager: "We haven't won away from home since November last year but, if we play like we did today, then that's fair enough."

At least the old Manchester United war-horse was able to return home with the Man of the Match champagne, recognition for a couple of timely interventions early on when Attilio Lombardo found space down the right.

● The kick-off was delayed when a parachute part of a team delivering the match ball to Selhurst Park fell awkwardly and sustained a suspected broken leg.



Twice bitten... Bolton's Nathan Blake, amid a bemused Huddersfield defence, follows up his shot to score the second goal on Saturday

Wolverhampton Wanderers 1 Bury 0

Bullblows away storm clouds over McGhee

Ron Warrow

STEVE BULL's predatory skills have often pulled Wolves from the brink of disaster and he was charged to rescue again on Saturday to disperse the storm clouds gathering over his manager Mark McGhee.

Wolves are desperate to get back into big-time football but a disappointing run of six games without a win had cast doubts over their promotion potential and brought jeers from frustrated fans.

The visit to Molineux of a Bury team boasting the meanest defence in the division

could not have provided McGhee with a harder task but it was a day when Wolves finally got back to maximum points.

McGhee's men never stopped testing the Bury wall for defects and their determination finally reaped its reward in the 66th minute when the dangerous Bull claimed his 250th league goal.

The Australian international defender Kevin Muscat finally got it right when he fired a perfect cross into the middle for Bull to power a header past the helpless Dean Kiely.

"We had to keep prodding

and probing and we eventually produced a reasonable bit of quality and got the all-important goal," said the relieved McGhee.

"We have no divine right to think Bury are a team we should beat by two or three goals. We knew because of their record this season we had to work hard to try to grind out a goal."

The crucial strike by the 33-year-old Bull, who had been struggling all week with the knee injury that kept him out of Wolves' Worthington Cup defeat by Bournemouth, was only the third conceded in the league this term by Neil Warnock's unexpected high-fliers.

Bolton Wanderers 3 Huddersfield Town 0

Rasher moments reveal porkies

Michael Walker sees the First Division pretenders' lack of quality players exposed

THE old saying about the league table not telling a lie was revealed as a fairly outrageous porky several miles outside Bolton on Saturday. It was not the Wanderers' doing, even if there is still something false and unsatisfactory about their no longer playing in their town, no, the fibbing here was Huddersfield Town's responsibility.

The Terriers arrived at the home of the Trotters as leaders of the Football League, a post-

tion they once called their own, although since the invasion of the Sudetenland not that often. Any side can fluke their way to the top early on, of course, but the fact that the previous Saturday Huddersfield had seen off Wolverhampton Wanderers suggested that pedigree rather than luck was behind the rise of Peter Jackson and Terry Yorath's team.

Therefore a trip to Bolton, a Premiership club in all but the name, was viewed as a genuine test of Huddersfield's

capability and thousands crossed into Lancashire to witness it. Hope was in their hearts. Sadly for the Yorkshiremen, embarrassment replaced hope as the companion on the journey back. Town had been painted red.

Consolation is sought quickly on such occasions and amazingly on such a wretched afternoon some was found. The old league table was culpable again as it continued to perpetuate the incorrect notion that Huddersfield Town are one of the best two teams in the First Division. This is clearly wrong, but on a bad day it provided something for the impres-

sively affable Jackson to cling to. "We're still up there," he said, "we're joint top."

On points, yes, in the future, no; a fact of life accepted honestly by Jackson. "Bolton are the best side that we have played by far. They and Sunderland are at the top and the rest are scrambling for four places — 10, maybe 12 teams. Hopefully we can be one of them."

That realism extended to Jackson's unpretentious analysis of this result. "They have better quality players. It showed today."

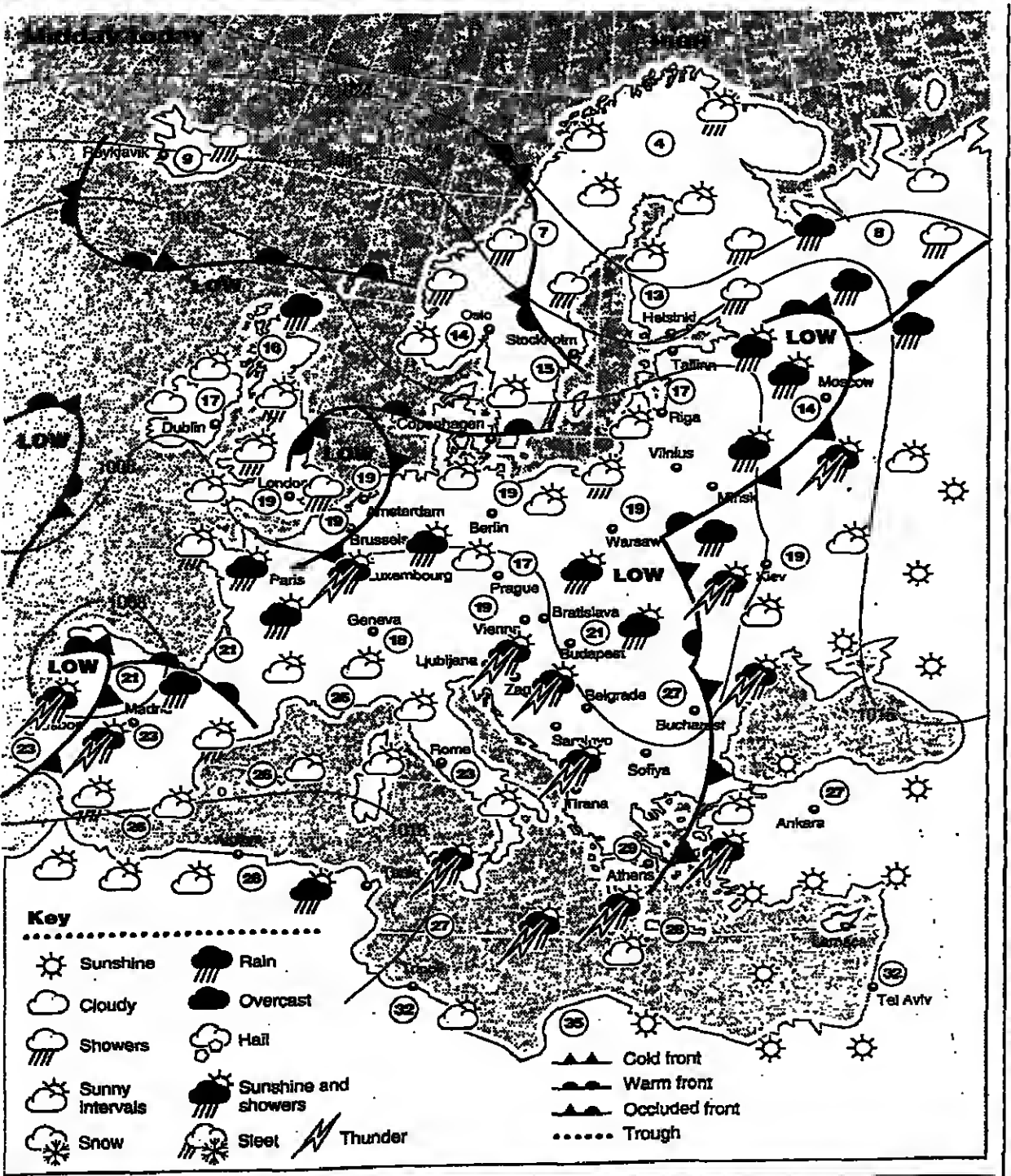
It certainly did, and from a Huddersfield perspective too swiftly. It may have taken

Bolton 15 minutes to break through and 10 more to make it two but Colin Todd's side could have been five ahead by then.

At the centre of the Town defence, Sam Collins and Kevin Gray were exposed for what they are: respectively, a through-the-ranks 21-year-old from Pontefract and a former Mansfield Town player, up against Nathan Blake and Arnar Gunnlaugsson, one feik for them.

Collins and Gray looked like self-conscious adolescents being taught ballroom dancing and Gunnlaugsson in particular was happy to waltz around them.

The weather in Europe



European outlook

Central Norway and Sweden will be cloudy with rain and drizzle. The rest of Scandinavia will be dry with sun at times. Highs from 3-5C in the north, up to 15-17C in the south.

Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland

The Low Countries, Switzerland and Austria will have heavy showers or rain, but this will move steadily eastwards during the day with sun and a few showers spreading from the west. Southern France will be largely dry with sunny spells, but some showers will edge into western areas during the night. Highs 15-20C.

France

Northern parts of France will have a lot of cloud with showers or longer spells of rain, but this will move steadily eastwards during the day with sun and a few showers spreading from the west. Southern France will be largely dry with sunny spells, but some showers will edge into western areas during the night. Highs 15-20C.

Spain and Portugal

Windy and wet weather will spread across northern and central parts of Spain and Portugal. Some of the rain will be thundery. Eastern and southern Spain and Portugal will remain largely dry with sunny spells, but showers will threaten during the afternoon. Highs from 20-25C in the north and central areas, but 25-30C in the south.

Italy

Southern and eastern Italy will have some heavy and thundery showers, but these will clear leaving mainly fine weather with warm sun in many places by the afternoon. Highs 25-27C.

Greece

Northern parts of Greece will become unsettled with heavy showers and thundery rain. However, southern and eastern Greece will remain largely dry with sunny spells and very warm. Highs 25-29C (77-84F).

Around the world

Yesterday's low-level reports

Algeria 22-27, London 10-15, Moscow 10-15, New York 10-15, Paris 10-15, Rome 15-20, Tokyo 15-20, Sydney 15-20, Wellington 10-15.

Television and radio

BBC 1

7.00am News, 7.30am News, 8.00am News, 8.30am News, 9.00am News, 9.30am News, 10.00am News, 10.30am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 12.00pm News, 12.30pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News, 12.30am News, 1.00am News, 1.30am News, 2.00am News, 2.30am News, 3.00am News, 3.30am News, 4.00am News, 4.30am News, 5.00am News, 5.30am News, 6.00am News, 6.30am News, 7.00am News, 7.30am News, 8.00am News, 8.30am News, 9.00am News, 9.30am News, 10.00am News, 10.30am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 12.00am News, 12.30am News, 1.00am News, 1.30am News, 2.00am News, 2.30am News, 3.00am News, 3.30am News, 4.00am News, 4.30am News, 5.00am News, 5.30am News, 6.00am News, 6.30am News, 7.00am News, 7.30am News, 8.00am News, 8.30am 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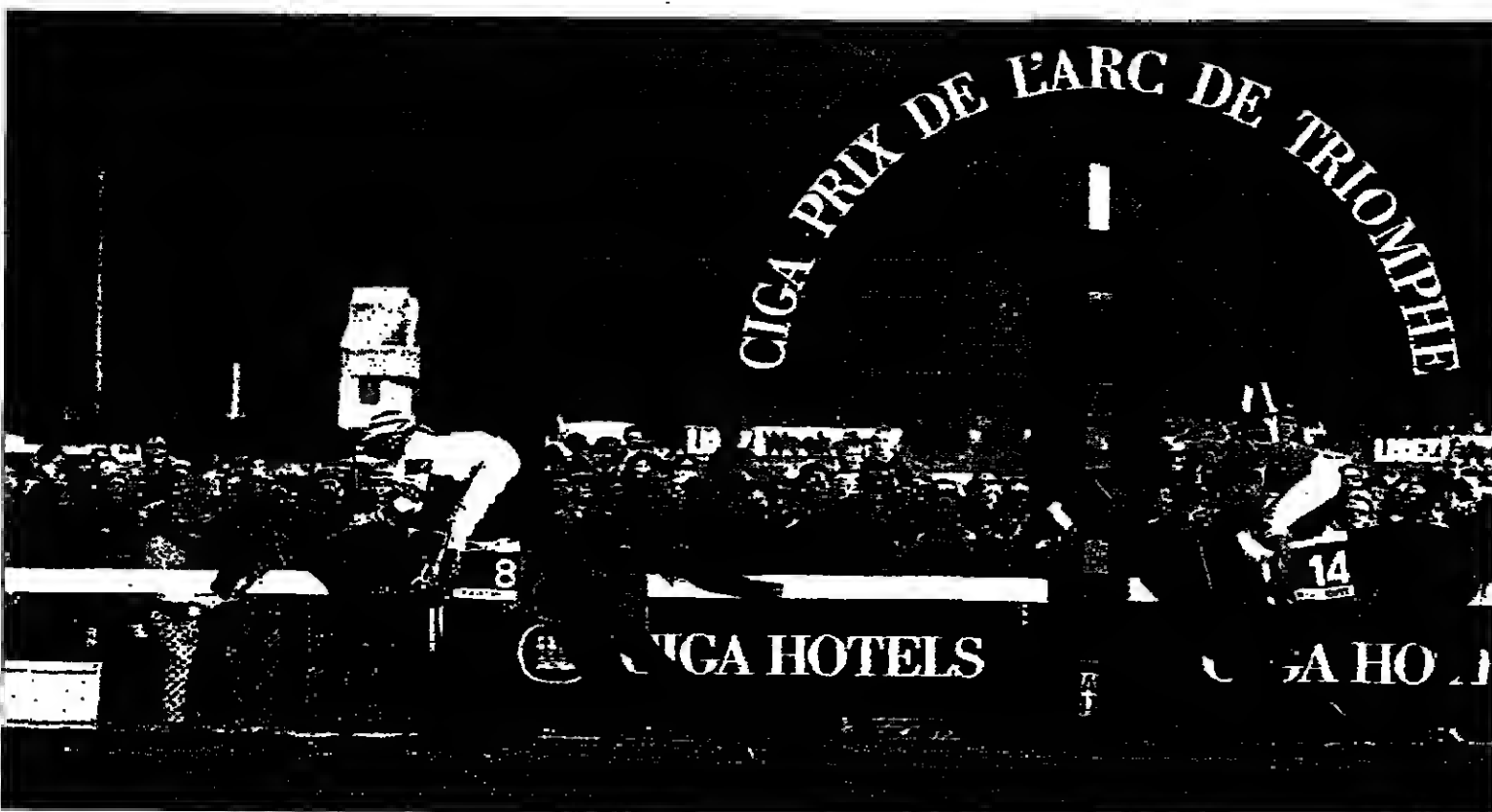
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In 1982, a brash young jockey called Asmussen rode out of the West. Now **Jamie Reid** finds the rangy Texan with the ten-gallon ego chasing a second Arc triumph on Sunday

Giving Cash more credit

CASH ASMUSSEN might have been a cowboy. The man from Laredo in the Lone Star state was taught how to ride almost before he could walk. As a boy he followed the rodeo circuit up to San Antonio and Fort Worth but his destiny was to ride thoroughbreds in Europe, not rope cows down on the Panhandle.

His father Keith trained 100 horses on the family ranch and Asmussen credits him as "the inspiring influence who set my talents free". As a skinny teenager "with plenty of back talk", Asmussen changed his first name from Brian Keith to Cash; he had decided to "try and maximise my earnings and potential in life".

Now 36, he may not be a household name in Britain where he has never been champion jockey or won the Epsom Derby. But he has won the Gravelle d'Or, the French jockeys' championship - five times as well as a stack of French Classics including their Derby equivalent, the Prix Du Jockey Club, twice and in 1991 he rode Suave Dancer to win the Prix De L'Arc De Triomphe. His yearly retainer with the Niarcho family in France is said to be in seven figures - in pounds and dollars.

Asmussen's journey to Paris began in 1981. The Texan had just ridden Watney Dostes to win the first running of the Japan Cup in Tokyo, and the late, great trainer Francois Boutin, an American and a keen internationalist, spotted

the young jockey's talent. Boutin was further impressed when he saw him riding in New York state the following spring and Asmussen soon found himself called into the office of the legendary Argentinian trainer Angel Penna.

"He started telling me how he knew I was going to be dumb enough to turn down a ticket to France," said Asmussen. "Of course he was just winding me up. I didn't know it then but a ticket had already been written with my name on it."

Asmussen's arrival at Chantilly, paid for by Boutin's principal owner Stavros Niarchos, did not please everyone. "I was the first guy to bring the American style to Paris. You know, low in the saddle and hands up around the horses neck. Not everybody liked it at first. But after 1,000 winners and five championships there is no greater compliment than the fact that so many other people have tried to ride like me."

Asmussen may have been brought up west of the Pecos but he is far from being the archetypal laconic westerner. He is a fluent and confident speaker, though his mannerisms charm some but alienates others. There has been criticism too of his tactical positioning in a race but most of those objections emanate from this side of the Channel.

This weekend the Texan will be in action again at Longchamp, where many of the leading figures in the international bloodstock industry will be gathered. Asmussen won eight of the 15 races at the meeting in 1998 and not sur-

prisingly the Arc weekend is his favourite fixture of the year.

His mount in Sunday's big race was intended to be the anti-post favourite Dream Well on whom he won this year's French and Irish Derbys. But the Maria Niarcho-owned colt produced an anticlimactic performance in his prep race two weeks ago at Longchamp, finishing 10 lengths behind his stable companion Croco Rouge and the Andre Fabre-trained Sagami. Even for an idle worker who patently needed the run it was a disappointing effort.

However, his prospects improved last Thursday after a strong workout at Chantilly. "It's a tough question right now as to whether or not he can make it," said Asmussen. "Is time against us or is he going to improve enough for us to find the real Dream Well, the horse I rode in Ireland in the summer?"

A clash between Dream Well and the Epsom Derby winner High-Rise would enable racing purists to determine the year's champion three-year-old.

But as another Flat racing season moves towards its climax, Asmussen has other exciting projects in prospect. He may ride the Prix Foy winner Limnos in the Arc or in the Prix Dollar, followed by the Japan Cup. And he cannot wait to renew his association with "Way Of Light, the two-year-old colt he describes as "a lovely big fellow with a lot of scope. He's really going to improve next year."

The thousands of exuberant British and Irish racegoers who will be making the

annual Arc pilgrimage will have their own views on how Asmussen has improved over the years. Some, still dwelling on the controversies like the day he was disqualified for reckless riding on Royal Galt in the 1988 Ascot Gold Cup, will exclude his mounts from their Part-Mutuel calculations.

Others will rely on the old maxim of horses for courses, and will recall that Asmussen's mastery of the slow early pace and sprint finishes of French racing is every bit as total as Lester Piggott's domination at Ascot and Epsom Downs.

But win or lose, Asmussen has no difficulty in dealing with the jockeys in the stand. "When you are 100 per cent convinced in yourself and you know you are one of the best in the world, that kind of stuff doesn't matter."

If self-belief is the key to winning trophies, you feel Asmussen would be the champion rider in every racing parish around the world from Maison La Fayette to Mauritius. At times his sleek rapier makes him sound like a cross between a Starbucks salesman and a graduate of the Jay Gatsby school of self-advancement.

In the final chapter of Scott Fitzgerald's novel, the hero's father tells him to copy the words of Hopalong Cassidy in which his son used to write notes to himself about the need to "practice elocution, poise and how to attain it" and "read one improving book or magazine per week."

Asmussen, another ambitious American trying to succeed in the unforgiving world of old money, has been equally diligent at polishing his manner and tone.

When he first arrived in Europe he was quick to learn French, and learnt it well. And when his initial bumptiousness was perceived as offensive in some quarters, he worked at adjusting his profile to fit in with what was expected of a jockey by the elderly tycoons and aristocrats once dominant among owners in France.

He feels his efforts have been appreciated. "You could say that the support and persistence of the Niarcho family has been one of the greatest things to my life, both as a pilot and as a human being."

"When I go out there to ride I know they're completely behind me. And that makes me a better athlete and a better professional. I'm a very spoiled man."

Some of Asmussen's fellow professionals have not always been as supportive. In 1997 he spent a year riding for Vincent O'Brien in Ireland, and it was an up-and-down season for both parties. Losing punters talking through their pockets are never a pretty sight but there was a feeling that Asmussen finished second in too many close finishes. He is keen to set the record straight.

"I took some flak. I came in with a big reputation, big publicity and big money. Ballydoyle is one of the finest training centres on the planet

but they didn't have the guns at the time. When I left, nothing suddenly moved up 10 pounds in the handicap. Owners are going to take you off their horses occasionally."

"But that year I rode 126 winners in three different countries and five of them were Group One winners. I had a strike rate of 38 per cent."

If I decide to retire after riding 2,000 winners and I've still got that kind of record, I'll feel I kicked some ass."

Asmussen may be spoilt, Rich, confident and talented but most definitely is. And enthusiastic about feeling "30 years young and still crazy for the game" he is not yet ready to ride off into a Texas sunset.

Riding high... Asmussen wins the Arc on Suave Dancer in 1991, above left. Relaxing on horseback with his 18-month-old daughter Catherine, above, at their Kentucky home.

PHOTOGRAPHS: REED BAKEMAN (ARC), HULTON GETTY (SUAVE DANCER), SPOTTING PICTURES (UK) (CATHY)

Chili's sauce has job rival Fogarty hot under collar

CENTRE STAGE

Pete Nichols



Mean and lean... Chili on the wrong track. ALEX LEVESEY

THE Japanese love Superbike racing. They should do, they make all the bikes. Just about. Only the Ducatis, in Superbike racing, are not made in the land of the rising sun, but the Ducatis do a disproportionate amount of the winning.

For six straight years - 1991-1996 - the Italian company won the constructors' championship. They missed last year, when Honda nosed in, but wrapped up another title in Assen last month.

Nobody much noticed that in Holland, for the attention was on Ducati for different reasons.

Pierfrancesco Chili is an Italian and races for Ducati. World Superbike racing is not long in the tooth (the championship started only in 1988) but Chili is the only Italian since its inception who might reasonably be said to be a contender. This contrasts with GP racing, in which Italians have monopolised the 250cc crown since 1991 and won three 125cc titles, too.

Going into the Assen race, the penultimate leg of this year's 12-race series, Chili was on the edge of the championship battle. The Italian won the first race (there are two in each round), but in the second slid out as Carl Fogarty eased through on the inside. "Unseated rider" is a pretty regular occurrence in racing; when you are at the limits, a feather on the helmet can make all the difference.

Chili did not see it that way. When he caught up with Fogarty in the pit lane, he was reported to have punched the rider from Blackburn. In fact he swung an arm and clipped Fogarty's visor. "It was more like handbags at 10 paces," said Fogarty later, in the press conference, the accusations flew with rare venom. Fogarty claimed Chili had caused him to crash. "But I was nowhere near him," said Fogarty. "He said I was weaving behind him which caused him to crash, but that's nonsense."

The crash effectively cost Chili any chance of the championship which, in any rider's book, is grounds for annoyance. It might also, if you read it Fogarty's way,

have cost the Italian his ride for next season.

The Ducati factory runs two teams in the championship: the Ducati performance team, in which Fogarty is the sole rider, and Team ADVE for which Chili and the Australian Troy Corser are the riders. Corser currently leads the championship by half a point. If that seems an unnatural fraction, it emanates from a half-finished round at Laguna Seca. Second in the championship is the New Zealander Aaron Slight on a Honda and third, another five and a half points back, comes Fogarty.

As yet, no Ducati contracts have been signed for next season. Everyone wants the ride because Ducatis win titles. The rumour is that the three seats going could come down to two. The second rumour is that Chili's contract states that he must finish in the top three in the championship. Fogarty's interpretation of all this is that Chili was lining up the seats for when the music stops. "I think it's a deliberate attempt by Chili to discredit me with Ducati so that I don't get a ride with them next year," he said.

Although he never lacks confidence on the bike, Fogarty underestimates his own status in the sport. The 31-year-old has twice won the Superbike title (in 1994 and 1995), ironically for the team manager, Virginio Ferrari, who now looks after Corser and Chili. The Briton has won 42 Superbike races, way ahead of Doug Polen's second-best total of 26 wins - Chili has just six - and no rider pulls in the crowds like

Fogarty, who helped draw over 65,000 to Brands Hatch again this summer.

The final round is on Sunday in Suzuka, Japan. Two races, 25 points a win, with the running total at Corser 328.5, Slight 328 and Fogarty 322.5. Chili had threatened to ruin the denouement. He maintained that he would focus only on stopping Fogarty winning, even at the expense of his own position.

Fogarty does not think that will come about. "I think the sport's given him a bollocking and told him to shut up," he said. "In fact, the sport didn't handle it very well. It should have dealt with it straight away. He was in the wrong and that was that."

Fogarty does not feel under any threat. Why should he? When it comes to racing at the limit, he has proved it more often than anyone in this class.

"I don't feel under any pressure. Hopefully it'll be dry in Japan and if it's I'll be confident," he said.

Honda could lose in again this year, and Slight will be under immense pressure in front of a Japanese crowd. The Ducatis will again be the favourites, Fogarty's experience giving him an edge over Corser who, despite leading the championship, has only won a single race all year.

Chili has a prayer. It involves a wet track, the top three crashing out in both races and himself finishing second or better each time.

The title would then be his. It is a faint hope, but even that would disappear if he spends all afternoon looking for Fogarty.



Final insult... Tilden was banned, reprieved and banned again as the US lost the 1928 Davis Cup. PHOTOGRAPH: HULTON GETTY

Way back when

Frank Keating on the day 'Le Grand Bill' beat 'Le Crocodile' to leave the tennis world gaping

THE English summer of 70 years ago had also been miserable. On their inaugural official cricket tour, George Challenger's West Indians disappointed themselves in the damp and lost all three Tests by an innings. Although Henley was rowed in gales, Wimbledon lost only one day to the rains. The men's champion

for the second time was "Le Crocodile" René Lacoste, who beat on his way the American Bill Tilden and two of his compatriots French "musketeers", Jean Borotra and Henri Cochet.

In the August, the ninth modern Olympics in Amsterdam, nestled for headline space, but as autumn arrived the international sports event most anticipated worldwide was the Davis Cup final in which the holders France awaited Tilden and his Americans in their brand-new stadium in Paris.

Tilden, the brash, engaging and flamboyant homosexual - at 6ft 5in, the French called him "Le Grand Bill" - had already won Wimbledon twice, in 1920 and 1921, and, at 35, was the most recognisable American on the planet, certainly more so than

President Calvin Coolidge or Gene Tunney, the world heavyweight champion.

France had dedicated the new athletic stadium in Paris, Stade Colombes, built for the 1924 Olympics, to the late wartime pilot and hero Yves du Manoir, and here named the new tennis complex, the Porte d'Auteuil, after another aviator, Roland Garros, the first man to fly the Mediterranean in 1913, and who was killed in aerial combat over the Flanders trenches in 1915.

The new courts had been opened in the summer with a friendly to armament between French and English "lady players", but now ticket sales rocketed beyond a million francs until a flood of them were returned at the announcement that Tilden would not be playing. On the eve of the final, the USLTIA committee suddenly declared that Tilden had been suspended for "debasing his amateur status". Each day of that summer's Wimbledon, Tilden had wired back long, partly written articles to a news agency which syndicated to over 100 newspapers in the US. Typically he had been rude about no end of his opponents, particularly the gamesman Borotra.

Tilden theatrically declaimed the ban. "I refute all charges. Writing is art and taste, not amateurism. I will be court-side trainer for my team tomorrow. Long live America!" One of his colleagues,

George Lott, threatened that the three other Americans might not play with him. At the draw, the evening before the first match was due, the USLTIA relented, lifting the suspension "in the interests of international good feeling", and Tilden was at once drawn against Lacoste in the opening singles. There was a clamour around the packed arena and beyond when the two players took the stage. Tilden had played little serious tennis since Wimbledon, claiming he had been emotionally distracted and spiritually spent by the controversy. What's more, the match began in the teeth of a swirling wind that kicked up the red dust of the new centre court. Furiiously sulking and out of sorts, Tilden helped it on its way. Lacoste won the first set 6-1 at a canter. The US historian Frank Deford's triumphant and poignant biography (Big Bill, Gollancz 1977) tells how Tilden then pulled himself together and threw his regular, booming and athletic game out of the window. "He started slicing every ball this way and that," he wrote. "As steady as Lacoste was, Tilden steadied him. If Tilden could not beat Lacoste as Tilden, then he would beat Lacoste as Lacoste."

Sages have handed down the certainty that this could well have been the most resplendent tennis match ever played. Lacoste

at 24, and 11 years Tilden's junior, was the champion of both Wimbledon and Forest Hills and at his peak. Nevertheless in that wind, Tilden set about the long rallies and hunted down the Frenchman.

As he approached 40, somehow Tilden was to win both Forest Hills (1929) and Wimbledon (1930) again, and although that afternoon in Paris may not have been his finest "Tilden" tennis, it must have been his best and most remarkable match of all. The old man won in five sets 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-3.

Deford wrote: "The others in the American team, familiar with the agonies of the mind that afflicted Tilden that week, watched the victory in disbelief... afterwards Lott called it a display of versatility that has never been equalled". In the locker-room Lacoste cried: "Two years ago I knew at last how to beat him," he said. "Now, on my own court, he beats me. I never knew how the ball would come off the court, he concealed it so well. I had to wait to see how much he was spinning - and sometimes it didn't spin at all. Is Tilden not the greatest player of all time?"

Three score and 10 years on, there are many in tennis who still insist that Big Bill, who died penniless and disgraced in 1963 aged 60, remains exactly that.

(Oh, yes, France won the 1928 Davis Cup final 4-1, and on returning home the avenging USLTIA banned Tilden for a year.)

chi, asked to chase 457 after being dismissed earlier in the day for 278, were 11 for two at stumps.

● Sachin Tendulkar made 127 not out against Zimbabwe in Bulawayo yesterday, his 18th century in one-day internationals and a new record, as India cruised to an eight-wicket win and went one up in the three-match series.

Silken victory under scrutiny

The Guardian Monday September 28 1998

PARTING SHOT

Barmy weather... not a raging equinoctial gale in sight or sail as hopeful board-sailors go out on the well-worn conditions off Clacton in the eighth round of the British Windsurfing Championships which suffered an improbably becalmed weekend

Photograph by Tom Jenkins



Time to blow the whistle on ex-players

SCREEN BREAK
Martin Kelner

WHAT is to be done about referees? The suggestion that the current crop might mysteriously start to perform better were they to become full-time professionals was rejected by Charlie George on Sky's Soccer Extra yesterday. The Arsenal legend is in favour of rank amateurs.

Former players, George believes, should be enlisted to pour oil on the currently troubled waters of the Premiership. "And don't make them wait 10 years to qualify as a first-class referee. Pay them five or seven hundred quid a match and get them out there," he said.

No names were mentioned, but Charlie looked pretty

'Ally McCoist goes into hyper-mugging mode every time he says something that passes for a joke. This is an irritant'

available to me. He certainly took a refreshingly breezy line on Paolo Di Canio's personal solution to the referee problem. "You can't help laughing at the way the referee's gone down as a dive than Wim Jonk's. I should imagine he's been hit harder by his wife."

George and his co-panelist Paul Walsh, formerly of Tottenham, agreed that if the referee had stepped in between the players at Hillsborough and got more involved — in a way familiar to George, of course, from his playing days — the trouble would not have escalated.

In my view, though, the chief advantage of former players taking up refereeing is that it might stop them hosting chat shows. I can see the attraction sports people have for TV producers looking for part-time experts who are therefore free to be fit and healthy and generally nice to look at (George, I am sure, would accept that there are exceptions). But when there is so much talk — it's a chat show, as Alan Partridge memorably observed — on TV these days you need to bring something more to the party than a nice, even set of teeth and a trendy well-fitting pair of trousers.

I refer of course to Ally McCoist, whose new late-night chat show, *McCoist and Macaulay*, followed Match of the Day on Saturday night. The show has already run for a

season in Scotland, where I gather it has been quite a hit. I cannot think why, unless there is a desperate shortage north of the border of interviews with Mel and Sue of Channel Four's *Light Lunch*, and actor Stephen Tomkinson of *Ballykissangel*.

McCoist goes into hyper-mugging mode every time he says something that passes for a joke — that is, either a bad pun or a self-deprecating reference to his playing career — turning to the audience, winking and giving them the benefit of his winning grin, which has a certain charm in the hurly-burly of Question of Sport but as a stand-alone device quickly becomes irritating.

His partner, Fred MacAulay, is a comedian of a type sadly becoming all too common, likeable but bland to the point of invisibility. Though I would accept that Lenny Bruce or Bill Hicks might not be absolutely perfect material for interviewing TV's Mel and Sue, it is slightly depressing when the summit of most comedians' ambition these days is to go to Edinburgh and impress some TV suit enough to get a chat show on a bar tab at the Groucho Club. What happened to changing society?

Roy and HG's Planet Norwich on Channel Five may not be about to change society but it does prove that there is life left in the chat show, and that talent remains more important than a pretty face.

This week Roy Slaven and HG Nelson (real names John Doyle and Greig Pickhaver) welcomed Chris Eubank, who sought to demonstrate that boxing had not softened his brain, although some of us will have drawn our own conclusions from his agreement to appear with Roy and HG after the punishment he took at the hands of Mrs Merton on another recent talk show.

To show his possession of an acceptable quantity of marbles, Eubank tried to remember 10 items listed by Roy, without a great deal of success, but at least he escaped in slightly better shape than he did after Mrs Merton, or indeed the Carl Thompson fight.

The great virtue of the guest is that the guest is virtually redundant. When the interviewee is some chat-show troll such as Eubank or Richard E Grant, whom we have seen a hundred times, this works rather well. Eubank's appearance, for instance, was the excuse for a very funny routine about Mike Tyson's return to the ring.

"He's undergoing tests at present," said HG, "to determine if he is psychologically fit to punch people's lights out." The key to Tyson's rehabilitation, he said to Eubank's obvious bewilderment, was to draw out of him the desire to eat people, by offering him sandwiches with something else in them "like a mouse or a canary".

This endearingly dotty show could be what Channel Five was invented for. Forget all the talk about disciplinary hearings and the like. Let's see Paolo Di Canio and Paul Alcock with Roy and HG next Friday.

Weekend results

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The Luxembourg Grand Prix

Hakkinen defies the odds to move into pole position

Alan Henry at Nürburgring sees the Finn triumph in the face of adversity to set up a World Championship finale at Suzuka

MIKKA HAKKINEN dramatically turned the tables on his World Championship rival Michael Schumacher by taking his McLaren-Mercedes to a dramatic and clear-cut victory over the Ferrari team leader in front of a capacity crowd here in the Luxembourg Grand Prix yesterday.

In one of the most assured and decisive performances of his career Hakkinen, against the odds and on the eve of his 30th birthday, delivered his seventh McLaren victory after Schumacher and the Ferrari No.2 Eddie Irvine had taken the front row of the grid.

The Finn's win takes him four points ahead of Schumacher in the drivers' championship table with only 10 more available for the winner of the final round, the Japanese Grand Prix on November 1.

Schumacher needs to finish at least second at Suzuka. If he wins, second would give Hakkinen the title

Schumacher needs to finish at least second at Suzuka without his rival doing better than sixth and, even if he wins, second place would give Hakkinen the title; they would then both have 96 points but the McLaren driver would triumph on the strength of three second places to Schumacher's two.

The weekend started on a very low note for Hakkinen. He spent practice and qualifying battling a handling imbalance on his McLaren, but finally got everything right in the half-hour warm-up yesterday morning.

On the opening lap Irvine seized an immediate lead from Schumacher but made a slight error negotiating the tight chicanes at the end of the opening lap, a slip which allowed the German driver to overtake neatly coming into the final corner.

Thereafter the race looked as though it was going to be little more than a routine Ferrari demonstration run, but after Hakkinen outbraked Irvine for second place on lap 14 the contest really came alive as he began to cut into Schumacher's advantage.

From 7.5sec adrift on lap 18, Hakkinen closed to 5.2sec behind by lap 24, when the German driver came in for his first refuelling stop. Hakkinen stayed out for another five laps before making his own first stop, punching in a sequence of quick laps which enabled him to return to the race ahead of Schumacher after his stop.

"In the first stint I was able to catch Michael," said Hakkinen, "but in the second stint it was hard to get away from him. Why? Well, there were a lot of backmarkers for one thing, and that made life very difficult. Also someone's engine blew up at the end of the main straight and we had to take a different line."

He said he had realised Irvine was grappling with some sort of handling problem when he was boxed in behind him in the early stages. "He lost the back end in the corners a couple of times and was hanging over the kerbs," said the Finn. "It seemed to have some sort of brake or gearbox problem and the fact I couldn't overtake really annoyed me."

The look of abject disappointment on Schumacher's face reflected just how confident he had been after qualifying on pole position. "In the first stint we had quite a bit of oversteer and it was similar in the second stint," he said. "At the second stop we changed the car slightly (adjusting the front wing) but I still had some oversteer. It is simply a complete package we were not fast enough."

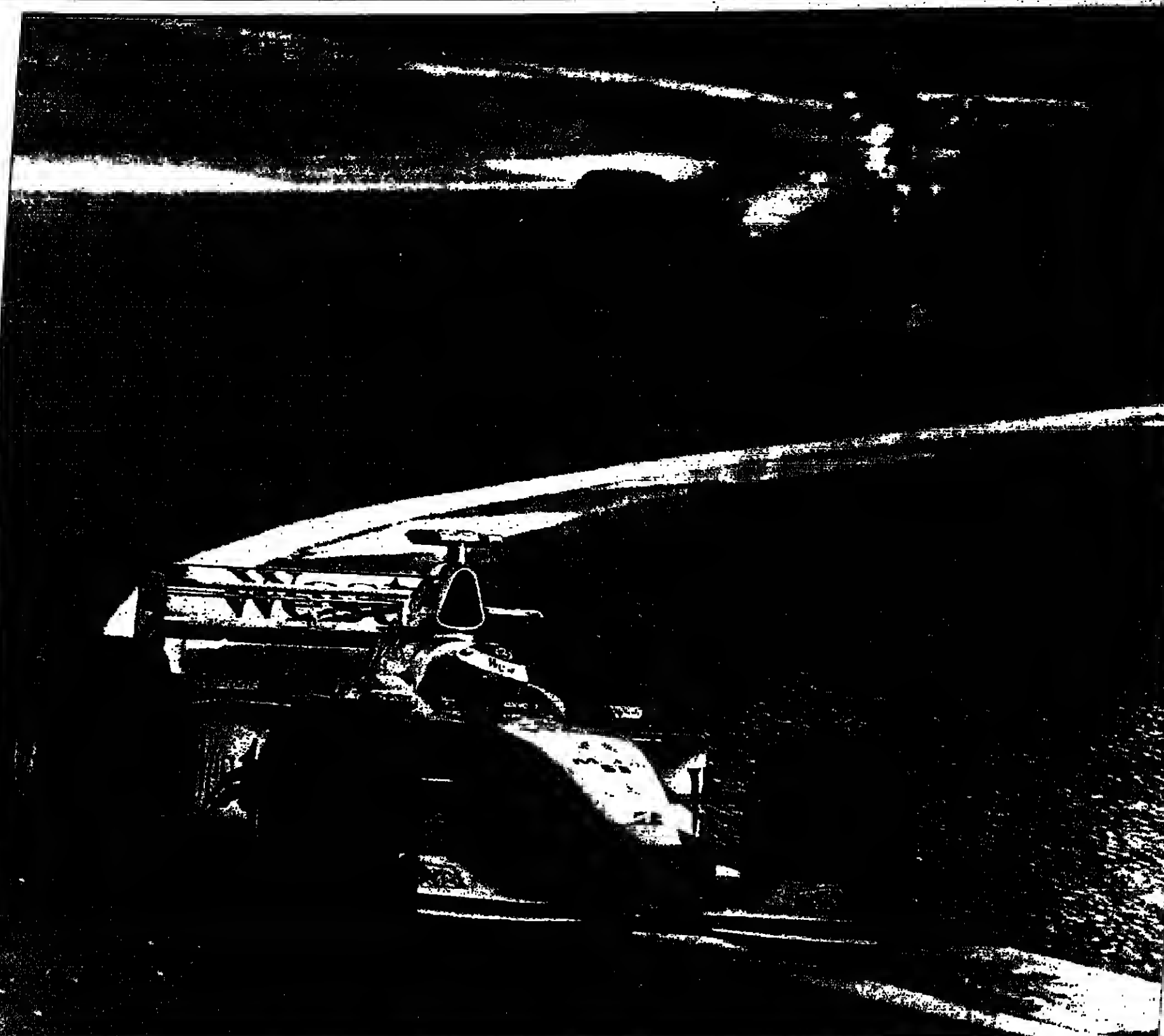
In third place Coulthard helped bring the McLaren-Mercedes team to within a point of clinching the constructors' championship but he was clearly dissatisfied with the handling balance of his car throughout.

"I think I was left behind by Mika the whole weekend," he shrugged. "I've struggled throughout. I didn't adopt the set-up which he tried in the warm-up. I struggled in the race, especially when the first set of tyres started to wear."

After qualifying on the front row of the grid for the first time in his career Irvine was highly disappointed with fourth place, his Ferrari suffering dramatically from understeer which seriously unsettled his handling.

In fifth place Heinz-Harald Frentzen helped Williams ease ahead of Benetton for third place in the constructors' championship behind McLaren and Ferrari.

Jordan's hopes of vaulting into third place were thwarted by Ralf Schumacher retiring with a broken brake disc while Damon Hill was another whose weekend was blighted by poor handling as he struggled home in eighth.



Title-chasing deeds... Mika Hakkinen pulls away from Michael Schumacher, his only rival for the World Championship, at the Nürburgring yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL COOPER

Full results from the Nürburgring

1	Mika Hakkinen (Finn)	McLaren-Mercedes	1:21.114
2	Michael Schumacher (Ger)	Ferrari	1:21.114
3	Damon Hill (Eng)	Williams	1:21.114
4	Eddie Irvine (Irish)	Ferrari	1:21.114
5	Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Ger)	Williams	1:21.114
6	David Coulthard (Scot)	McLaren-Mercedes	1:21.114

Other finishers		Drivers' championship	
7	Jeremy Clarkson (Eng)	1	Mika Hakkinen (Finn)
8	Stefano Modena (Ital)	2	Michael Schumacher (Ger)
9	Ralf Schumacher (Ger)	3	Damon Hill (Eng)
10	Juan Pablo Montoya (Col)	4	Eddie Irvine (Irish)
11	Pedro Pablo Kuczajski (Arg)	5	Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Ger)
12	Christijan Albers (Neth)	6	David Coulthard (Scot)
13	Mark Blundell (Eng)	7	Jeremy Clarkson (Eng)
14	Mika Salo (Fin)	8	Stefano Modena (Ital)
15	Roberto Benetton (Ital)	9	Ralf Schumacher (Ger)
16	Toni Vilander (Fin)	10	Juan Pablo Montoya (Col)
17	Esteban Tuero (Arg)	11	Pedro Pablo Kuczajski (Arg)
18	Ralf Schumacher (Ger)	12	Christijan Albers (Neth)
19	Jean-Marc Gounaud (Fr)	13	Mark Blundell (Eng)
20	Walter D'Adda (Ital)	14	Mika Salo (Fin)
21	James Watson (Scot)	15	Roberto Benetton (Ital)
22	Pedro Pablo Kuczajski (Arg)	16	Toni Vilander (Fin)

Did not finish/not classified: 17 Esteban Tuero (Arg), 18 Ralf Schumacher (Ger), 19 Jean-Marc Gounaud (Fr), 20 Walter D'Adda (Ital), 21 James Watson (Scot), 22 Pedro Pablo Kuczajski (Arg).

Fastest lap: Hakkinen 1:20.460 (average speed 177.4 km/h)

Constructors' championship

1	McLaren-Mercedes	26	Benetton
2	Ferrari	27	Williams
3	Williams	28	Jordan
4	Williams	29	Williams
5	Williams	30	Williams

Doubters silenced as Finn roars his intent

James Mitchell sees Hakkinen drive a Schumacher-style race to seize the initiative

TODAY is Mika Hakkinen's 30th birthday but, whatever presents he receives, he is unlikely to enjoy them as much as his victory in yesterday's Luxembourg Grand Prix.

The Finn's win, which means he needs at most to finish second to Michael Schumacher in the remaining race of the season to clinch the drivers' championship, answered any questions there might have been about his ability to cope with the pressure of a battle with the German.

It was the first time this season that Hakkinen and McLaren have beaten Schumacher and Ferrari in a straight fight with the same race strategy. That fact is likely to lift Hakkinen through the five weeks before the title decider at Suzuka in Japan as much as it clearly shocked Schumacher.

The twice world champion is not used to losing races such as this.

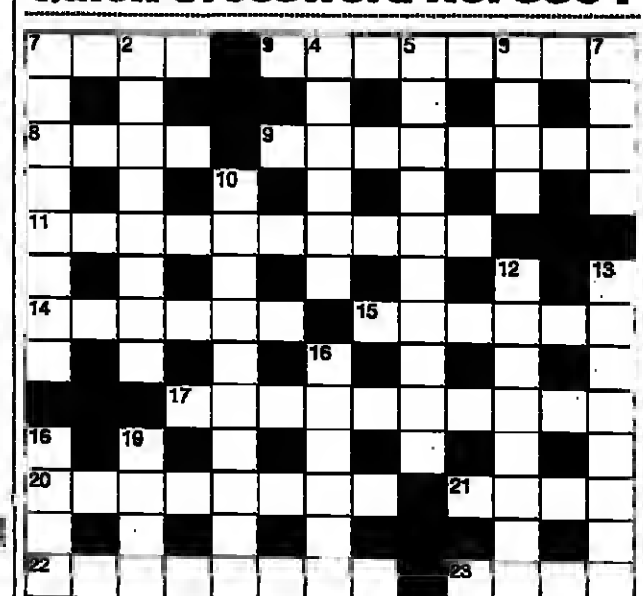
At this event, Hakkinen beat him. It was probably the best drive of his career.

something acknowledged not only by McLaren's managing director Ron Dennis but also by Ferrari's sporting director Jean Todt. In the 67 laps, Hakkinen displayed all the fighting qualities required of a world champion.

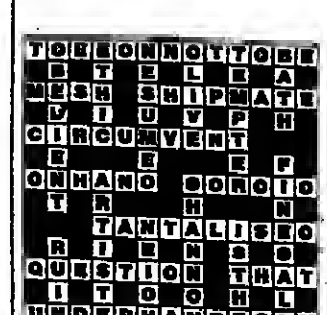
He pulled a brilliantly opportunistic overtaking move on Schumacher's team-mate Eddie Irvine, and once past the Irishman he remorselessly closed on the leading Ferrari.

Then, when Schumacher came in for the first of his two pit stops, Hakkinen made up five seconds in four laps so that after the stop he came out in the lead.

Quick Crossword No. 8864



- Across**
- 1 Pleased (4)
 - 2 All-inclusive (6)
 - 3 Strong desire (4)
 - 4 Form of neuritis (6)
 - 5 Track suitable for riding (6,4)
 - 6 Artificial (5)
 - 7 Result (3)
 - 8 One's spouse (6,4)
 - 9 Unusual - novel (5)
 - 10 One of the world's largest deserts (4)
 - 11 Largest city in China (5)
 - 12 Women's clothes worn by a man - a bore! (4)
- Down**
- 1 Complained (5)
 - 2 Most late (3)
 - 3 Give affirmative reply to invitation (3)
 - 4 Establishment for people needing bodily improvement (6,4)
 - 5 Placed (4)
 - 6 Scorch (4)
 - 7 Complimentary (10)
 - 8 Criticise harshly - thrash (6)
 - 9 Foremost (5)
 - 10 Layers of rock (6)
 - 11 Deficit (4)
 - 12 Capital of Peru (4)



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Davis Cup, World Group qualifier: Great Britain v India

Henman climbs to the summit

Richard Jago sees the British No.1 secure promotion as Rusedski takes a rain check

GREAT BRITAIN are within range of an old peak in a new era. Tim Henman's 7-6, 6-2, 7-6 conquest of an unpredictably inventive Leander Paes earned a 3-1 winning lead over India and ensured a climb back to the World Group of the Davis Cup for the first time in six years.

It was revenge for the 1992 World Group defeat by India which sent Britain plunging downwards. For the first time in the 50 years since Britain last won the Davis Cup there is serious talk of them winning it again.

Henman's eagle stares, posing punches and foot-shuffling celebrations made it clear that he believes in that possibility.

This was not only his best Davis Cup match, Henman reckoned, it was "right up there with my other achievements". Davis Cup promotion was comparable to a personal top-10 ranking or a Wimbledon semi-final, he felt, and "had been on the agenda for a couple of years".

"Both Greg and I believe that on a given day we can beat anyone, so we know we could win the Davis Cup. This means so much to us and so much to the country."

Henman also reckoned these were the worst conditions in which he had ever played. The balls were damp and heavy and, if not struck solidly, would dip lifelessly into the net or slew treacherously wide. The lines became

so slippery that there was increasing risk of a fall. Serve-and-volleying became too risky to attempt with frequency. So whereas Henman tried to work his way to the net, Paes gambled on his foot-footed net coverage with audaciously contrived approaches. When he got there he was often made by Henman to plunge like an upstream salmon.

The Indian had an increasingly sore shoulder and a bruised foot which required treatment early in the third set. But there was no damage to his pride or his motivation.

Six games before the end it began to rain and the referee came on to inspect the court. Paes seemed happy to stop but the drama in the damp went on.

Henman appeared to have fewer of the concentration lapses which occasionally blight his game.



David Lloyd wraps an arm around Tim Henman

JAMES McDONALD